

# ILGWU NEWS-HISTORY

FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY CONVENTION ISSUE

CHAPTER 9

1933-1937

## NRA and RECOVERY

# ILG Membership Soars to 200,000

## The Hour for Action

By DAVID DUBINSKY

The Recovery Act offers the workers of America a marvelous chance to recover the ground lost in the past four years and to establish a sound basis for future advancement. But without strong unions in every essential industry to back it up, the Recovery Act may not be of great or permanent good to the American wage earners. Fortunately, the American labor movement is responding to this great opportunity in an inspiring manner.

Our own ILGWU is determined to take the fullest advantage of this historic moment. A call for organization has gone forth throughout the land, into every market and factory where women's garments of every description are being made. And the answer to this call—from places as far apart as Seattle, Dallas, Los Angeles, Kansas City, Minneapolis, Buffalo, Scranton, Chicago, St. Louis, Cleveland, Reading, and many other places too numerous to mention—by workers who have heretofore not belonged to a union, is truly encouraging.

Offices are already being established by the ILGWU in all of these places to spur organizing activity and to help the women's garment workers to derive the fullest benefits obtainable from the National Industrial Recovery Act. Dozens of charters for new organizations have been issued in the past few weeks and a number of other local unions have been revived.

The atmosphere of hopelessness that has hung over the heads of the garment and other workers for the past four years is clearing. The time of complaining and crying over bad conditions is past! The hour of action has arrived!

—RADIO ADDRESS, July 25, 1933

## Name Dubinsky to Union Presidency; Schlesinger Passes

Following the death of Pres. Benjamin Schlesinger on June 6, 1932, the General Executive Board, at a special meeting on June 15, unanimously elected General Secretary-Treasurer David Dubinsky to the presidency of the ILGWU.

Dubinsky had been vice president of the International since his election to that post by the Cleveland convention in May, 1922. At the 20th convention of the union, in December, 1929, he was chosen general secretary-treasurer and was re-elected to that post in May, 1932, at the Philadelphia convention.

Prior to his election by the GEB as president, David Dubinsky had filled the post of acting president during the period when the late Pres. Schlesinger, incapacitated by a devastating illness, was unable to attend to the duties of his office. His election to the presidency without opposition, therefore, came as a logical and expected thing.

—ILGWU CONVENTION REPORT, 1934

## Recovery Rally at Garden Celebrates Dressmakers' Pact

NEW YORK, Oct. 5, 1933 — A "victory celebration" to mark the conclusion of the recent agreement in the dress industry by which the sweatshop was abolished and comprehensive wage and working improvements were obtained by 80,000 workers in New York and vicinity was held yesterday by the ILGWU. All workers quit their shops at noon on a half-holiday arranged with the consent of the employers and assembled in Madison Square Garden for the "recovery rally."

Many thousands unable to get in the Garden attended overflow meetings and heard the speeches through amplifiers.

Among the speakers was William Green, president of the AFL, who addressed the meeting by radio from Washington. Others included Edward F. McGrady, chief labor advisor to Gen. Hugh Johnson, National Recovery Administrator, and Assistant Secretary of Labor; Grover Whalen, chairman of the local NRA; David Dubinsky, president of the garment union; Abraham Cahhan, editor of the "Jewish Daily Forward"; Julius Hochman, leader of the Dressmakers' Union.

The workers applauded the achievements of the NRA and at several points cheered when the name of President Roosevelt was mentioned in connection with the NRA program.

—HERALD TRIBUNE

CHICAGO, May 23, 1934—Reporting nearly 150,000 new members organized in the past year, the General Executive Board described for delegates to the ILGWU Convention opening here today the spectacular rise in garment union strength that has raised the ILGWU to the position of third largest international union in the nation today. Said the report:

"We come to this convention representing 131 locals in 56 cities and 16 states. In 1932 at the Philadelphia convention we reported only 52 locals. Now we have a membership of 200,000 as compared with 60,000 in 1932.

"Our task, however, is far from completed. We have gained in the past year nearly 150,000 new members and we have organized nearly 80 new local unions throughout the United States and Canada. From an unenviable position of a tail-end union in the ranks of American labor, we have emerged today as the third largest international union in the American Federation of Labor, with our fighting morale at its highest point and our material resources multiplied many times. But we still have a distance to go be-

fore we may claim that every woman and man employed in our trades belongs to our International Union.

"To hold our vast army of new recruits, to defend their varied work standards in so many different places, to make good trade unionists out of them and to fortify the union's general position against the eventuality of a reaction, is evidently a colossal task. We must train our new members to administer their local affairs in harmony with the general rules and program of our International Union and of the labor movement. We must keep on perfecting the control machinery for all shops in every district to the fullest possible extent."

—ILGWU CONVENTION REPORT, 1934

## Philly Strike Touches off ILGWU Recovery Drive

PHILADELPHIA—All through 1932 and the early months of 1933, the situation of Local 50, reflecting the deplorable economic condition of the Philadelphia dress workers, remained in a pitiful state. What was left of the once strong dressmakers'

union in that city amounted to a group of staunch, loyal trade unionists who, for nearly 10 years, did their best to keep up a skeleton organization in the hope of better times ahead.

The dress employers in Philadelphia were decidedly anti-union, and having kept aloof from the union since the unfortunate 26-week strike in 1921, would be a hard proposition to fight. Only a great strike movement embracing the entire industry could hope for success.

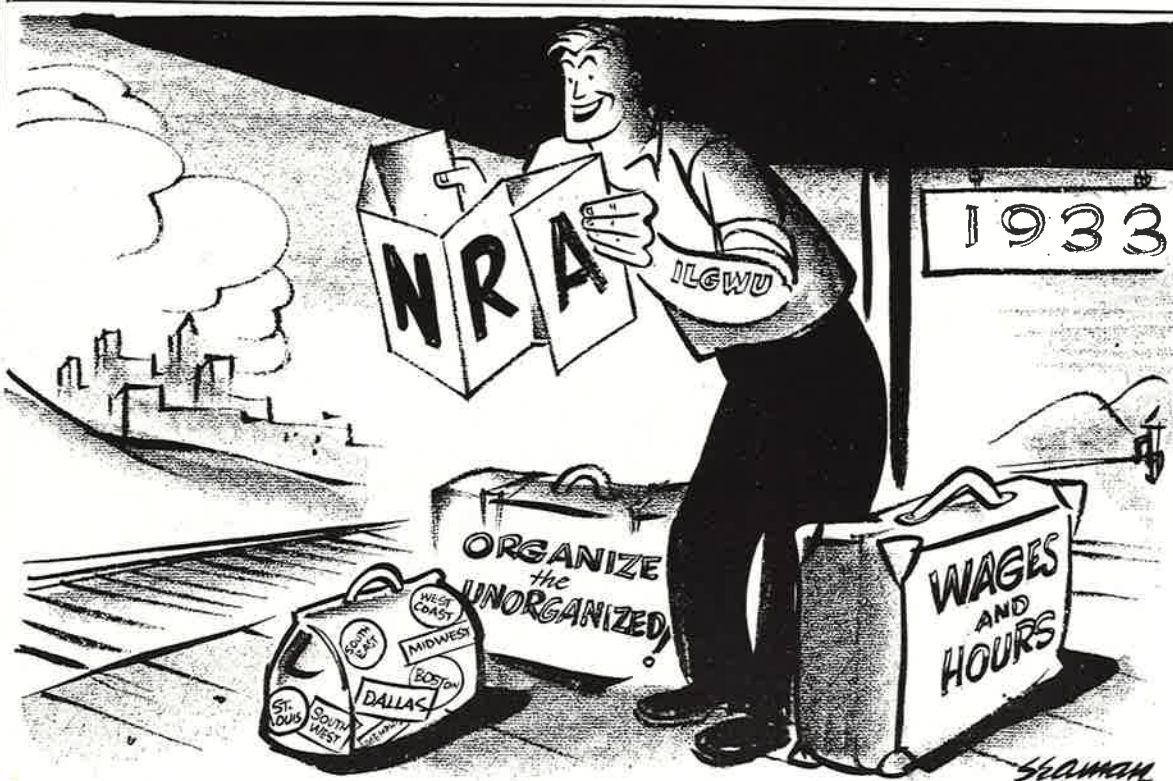
It was for such an opportunity that the General Executive Board and Local 50 had been waiting for years. In February, 1933, Pres. Dubinsky finally gave the signal to start mobilizing Philadelphia dressmakers for a strike.

The actual date of the walkout was, nevertheless, delayed for several weeks owing to the bank "holiday" which practically shut down all industry in Philadelphia for a time.

The dress pressers, who belonged to Local 71 since 1932, had also decided to call a stoppage on May 2, demanding an increase in wages. The General Office asked Vice Pres. George Rubin to advise the pressers to postpone their stoppage and rather help prepare the machinery

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## "Going Places"



# West Mfrs. Seek To Use Code to Undermine East

NEW YORK, Nov. 27, 1933—A deliberate attempt by a handful of Western manufacturers to undermine the New York and other principal dress manufacturing centers of the country was charged today by David Dubinsky, president of the ILGWU, on his return from the Washington hearings on the dress and cotton garment codes.

The union president asserted that the wage differentials under the dress code sought by the Western employers, and the Reed amendment to define what constitutes a cotton dress under the cotton garment code, are designed to smash already established markets, and to do this at the expense of labor as well.

Mr. Dubinsky excoriated Chicago and Cleveland dress manufacturers for not attending the hearing.

"The union made it perfectly clear at the hearings," Dubinsky said, "that we are not interested in taking business from one market to give to another. This may be to certain employers' interests, but not ours. The St. Louis and Los Angeles dress manufacturers originally sought a 25 per cent wage differential, but now they have the boldness to demand a 40 per cent differential, in order to take away the business of the Eastern market."

"This brazen demand would work an injustice not only on the workers of St. Louis and Los Angeles. It also would give competition to Chicago, New York and other important markets on a basis of labor costs, instead of on the basis of management efficiency, etc."

"A constructive fight for equalization and fair competition has degenerated into a fight upon labor. It was discouraging to see that the Cleveland and Chicago dress manufacturers failed to appear at the hearings. They will always organize against labor, but in this case they were conspicuous by their absence."

Reverting to the cotton garment code, the union president stated that the opposition sought to include silk, woolen and rayon dresses under that code.

## No Longer Housedresses

"Instead of bringing cotton dresses under the regular dress code, which was the aim of every enlightened interest in the industry, the Reed amendment, if accepted, would mean that only Hattie Carnegie and Bergdorf-Goodman would remain under the regular dress code," Pres. Dubinsky stated.

"The hearings clearly disclosed that so-called 'housedress' manufacturers are not housedress manufacturers; for their product is bought by the consumer as a regular dress, for as high as \$12 and \$15 each. They are not made of cotton exclusively but also of wool, rayon and other materials."

This type of garment, Dubinsky said, was originally called a housedress for the sake of establishing a lower standard. The present definition, as a garment made "chiefly" of cotton, however, has proved unsatisfactory to the Western manufacturer, because he now manufactures an entirely different article for which he seeks to obtain the same benefits.

—WOMEN'S WEAR DAILY

## NEEDLE UNIONS WAGE FIGHT ON HOMEWORK AS THREAT TO CODE

By ROSE C. FELD

Where the sweatshop involved hundreds of workers, and those concentrated in industrial centers, the homework industries involve thousands, and these are scattered from Maine to California, with a vast number in outlying rural districts.

Ten cents an hour is considered a high wage in the up-to-date homework industry. Three cents an hour is not uncommon.

One firm of children's knitted garments has 10,000 homeworkers "on call," employs 3,000 regularly, pays from 4 to 6 cents an hour (which is considered high), and has an annual payroll of \$125,000.

The pleating, stitching, bonnaz and hand embroidery industry has 45,000 homeworkers scattered from New York to the Pacific coast.

For bringing this subject of homework out into the open, the writing of the NRA codes has been responsible. Over 600 of them have been drawn since July, 1933.

Each industry went to Washington as an independent group, wrangled for a while, and wrote its own code. Where the mass of workers in the industry was factory-employed, the regulation of homework was strict, if the practice was not abolished altogether; where the industry was already preponderantly organized on a homework basis, the regulation was perfunctory. Outstanding in the fight for complete abolition of homework are the garment organizations. Their strong labor organizations, determined to avoid the destruction of wage scales brought about by the free employment of homeworkers, have been the chief instruments in this success.

Each industry has four separate provisions in its code for conditions of labor. These are: (1) the limitation of labor to 40 hours a week; (2) a minimum wage somewhere between 30 and 35 cents an hour; (3) the prohibition of child labor; and (4) the right to collective bargaining. The fact remains that they have been widely violated. And one of the most prevalent forms of violation has been through the use of homeworkers.

American manufacturers in many industries have cut their factory personnel to a minimum and have turned to homework as the major source of their labor supply. Today, in tens of thousands of homes, the hours of labor run to 60 and 70 a week, wages range between 3 and 10 cents an hour, and the laborers may be immature children or feeble oldsters who would not be allowed inside a factory gate.

—FORUM, March, 1935

## ILG Contract Sets Pace for Winnipeg; Grants Closed Shop

WINNIPEG, Oct. 4, 1935 — Some 700 cloakmakers in the city are at work today after voting unanimously in favor of an agreement signed Thursday by the Winnipeg Ladies' Garment Manufacturers' Assn. and the ILGWU.

This agreement, the first of its kind ever signed in Winnipeg, provides for improved working conditions. It calls for 10 and 15 per cent wage increases for the workers, a 44-hour week for the first year, and a 42-hour week the second year of the agreement. Overtime work will be paid for at time and one-quarter.

The employers are to run closed union shops, with a shop chairman who will negotiate with the employers on behalf of the workers. Any extra help needed will be secured from the union.

—WINNIPEG TRIBUNE

## Dubinsky Named by Green to Serve on ILO Top Executive

NEW YORK, Apr. 15, 1935—Pres. Dubinsky's appointment by William Green to take his place at the April session of the governing body of the International Labor Office in Geneva, is more than a friendly gesture on the part of the AFL.

The selection of Pres. Dubinsky to represent the AFL on the executive board of the ILO is all the more significant because this is the first time the organized labor movement in America will be represented on that international assembly of labor, industry and governmental representatives, meeting under the aegis of the League of Nations.

This undertaking marks the initial entry of American labor into the world of international labor relations to determine, on a basis of parity, conditions of employment in industry and agriculture the world over, and the voice of American labor, this time through Pres. Dubinsky, in that meeting will be listened to and watched with special interest.

—JUSTICE

## Five-to-One



Four policemen and a plainclothes man consider themselves to be an equal match for one brave Dallas picket, February, 1937.

# The True Cost of a Five-Dollar Special

By FRANCES PERKINS

(Secretary of Labor in Roosevelt Administration)

It hangs in the window of one of the little cash-and-carry stores that now line a street where fashionable New Yorkers used to drive out in their carriages to shop at Tiffany's and Constable's. It is a "supper dress" of silk crepe in "the new red," with medieval sleeves and graceful skirt. A card-board tag on the shoulder reads:

"Special \$4.95." Bargain basements and little ready-to-wear shops are filled with similar "specials."

But the manufacturer who pays a living wage for a reasonable week's work under decent conditions cannot turn out attractive silk frocks to retail at \$5 or less. The real cost is borne by the workers in the sweatshops that are springing up in hard-pressed communities. Under today's desperate need for work and wages, girls and women are found toiling overtime at power machines and work tables, some of them for paychecks that represent a wage of less than 10 cents a day.

The sweatshop employer is of- fending against industry's standards, as well as against the standards of the community. The employer who, in order to pay fair wages for reasonable hours of work, produces dresses in his shop to retail at \$9.50, finds himself in competition with the less conscientious manufacturer whose "sweated" garments are offered at \$4.95.

## Shoestring Sweatshop

As we have come to know him in New York, this sweatshop proprietor is a "little fellow," doing business on a shoestring. He must make a quick turnover or go under. Since he cannot hope to meet union conditions or the requirements of the labor law, he goes to some outlying suburb where garment factories are not a feature of the local picture and where state inspectors are not on the lookout for him. Or perhaps he goes to a nearby state—New Jersey, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts—where he believes labor laws are less stringent or that he will escape attention.

The goods he makes up are probably cut in a city shop and "bootlegged" to him by truck. His operations are minutely subdivided so

that they can be quickly learned and require little skill. His work force is made up of wives and daughters of local wage earners who have been out of work for months or even years and whose family situation is desperate. The boss sets the wage rates, figures the pay slips, determines the hours of work. His reply to any complaint is, "Quit if you don't like it."

The Massachusetts Commissioner of Labor and Industries, in a survey of wages paid in Fall River, reports the earnings of more than 50 per cent of the women and girls employed on piece work were as follows:

One employee at 5 cents an hour; one employee at 6 cents an hour; three employees at 7 cents an hour; two employees at 8 cents; 10 employees at 9 cents; nine employees at 10 cents; 12 employees at 12½ cents; 13 employees at 13½ cents; 18 employees at 14 cents; 13 employees at 15 cents.

The report adds: "Assuming constant activity by those workers during the 48 hours of the plant's operation, the weekly earnings of the highest paid workers in the group just cited, namely, those earning 15 cents an hour, would have been \$7.20."

The factories whose payrolls were studied in this survey had come to Fall River from New York and elsewhere, Commissioner Smith points out, "under the double lure of cheap rentals to be found in the discontinued textile mills and a surplus of unemployed female labor, mostly young, unskilled girls."

## Return to Sweatshop Days

And he comments, "These plants are for the most part in charge of men of inferior business caliber, who probably could not survive at all if it were not for their willingness to be entirely ruthless in exploiting labor."

Working conditions, including safety provisions, sanitation, rest room facilities and so on, are, like standards of wages and hours, holding up well in responsible concerns. In the runaway shop conditions are usually far below standard and the picture of such a plant is a look back to the sweatshops that horrified case workers and visiting nurses at the turn of the century.

What is the way out for the conscientious consumer who does not want to buy garments, even at a bargain, made by exploited labor? Common sense will tell the purchaser that someone must pay the price of the well-cut silk dress offered at \$4.95. The manufacturer is not producing these frocks for pleasure or for charity. If the purchaser does not pay a price that allows for a subsistence wage and reasonable hours and working conditions, then the cost of the "bargain" must be sweated out of the workers.

The red silk bargain dress in the shop window is a danger signal. It is a warning of the return of the sweatshop, a challenge to us all to reinforce the gains we have made in our long and difficult progress toward a civilized industrial order.

—SURVEY GRAPHIC, February, 1933.

# BATTLELINES...

Apparel markets across the nation are linked today by the militant picket lines that mark the advance of the unionized garment workers. From Minneapolis to Memphis, from Long Island to Los Angeles, the garment workers are astir with the excitement of building their own union.

The fight today is a fierce one. Tempers run high. The law as yet does not prohibit the formation of phoney, company-dominated "unions." The forces of "order" under the influence of anti-labor ordinances are quick to smash picket lines.

But the battle goes on! ILGWU members, like their embattled brothers and sisters in the mass production industries, will accept nothing less than victory in this forward march of America's aroused working people.



The law takes a fall in Kansas City scuffle.



Swinging out for her union in picketing of Newark dress plant.



Landing a haymaker in Memphis garment walkout.



Clubmen go to work



Victim of the bosses' hirelings.

# AFL CIO

DURING THE LAST DAYS of the Atlantic City convention of the American Federation of Labor, in October, 1935, after a resolution for industrial unionism polled close to 35 per cent of the total vote, an informal conference was held to discuss the advisability of keeping the unions favoring the industrial union form of organization for mass production industries in contact with each other and for cementing their forces for future AFL conventions. Participating in the conference were John L. Lewis of the United Mine Workers, Charles P. Howard of the Typographical Union, Sidney Hillman of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, and Pres. Dubinsky of the ILGWU.

FOLLOWING THAT CONFERENCE, John L. Lewis called another meeting on Nov. 10, 1935 at which it was decided to form the Committee for Industrial Organization.

**OUR GENERAL EXECUTIVE BOARD** first took official cognizance of our affiliation with the CIO at its fourth quarterly meeting in Cleveland early in December, 1935. Pres. Dubinsky told members of the GEB that neither the legality of the CIO nor the right of unions to organize in a group for the purpose of propagating for a change of either policy or tactics within the AFL could be disputed. While he did not fully agree with the tone and approach employed by some of the leaders of the CIO with regard to its opponents, Pres. Dubinsky declared, nothing could overshadow the fact that the CIO represented a movement with which the ILGWU has profound sympathy.

THE CLEVELAND MEETING of the GEB discussed the matter at great length. Those who argued for withdrawal from the CIO stated that the activity of the CIO was bound to develop dual union lines, and that the CIO, instead of helping the cause of industrial unionism, was liable to retard it. Those who favored continuing affiliation with the CIO stressed that the only way to advance industrial unionism was by keeping the issue alive before the American workers; that running out of the CIO would be a repudiation of the principles which we have time and again advocated at AFL conventions.

THE GEB THEN ADOPTED a statement proposed by Pres. Dubinsky which read in part:

"The millions of workers in American industry who are unorganized should not be left outside the fold of the organized labor movement because of a form of organization unsuited to their industrial environment. Without the protection of trade unions, these millions are today not only compelled themselves to live below the level of a decent existence, but by the very fact that they are forced to accept inferior standards of work and livelihood, they are pulling down the general standard of working conditions in our country.

"If we neglect to organize them into the bona fide American labor movement, there is imminent danger that these masses of workers will either be forced into company unions or will be lured by other subversive or dual movements. This duty to bring these millions in the basic mass production industries into the ranks of the organized labor movement becomes all the more imperative at this hour when the selfish predatory forces of industry, high finance and all other elements of reaction have resumed their attacks upon all social and labor legislation and are intent upon wiping out every economic gain and advantage secured by the workers in the last few years."

ON JULY 16 WE RECEIVED notice from the AFL Executive Council to appear before it as an affiliate of the CIO on Aug. 3, to answer the charge of engaging in "fostering and supporting a dual organization and fomenting insurrection within the AFL and acting in violation of and in opposition to the decision of the convention."

ON JULY 21, the international unions affiliated with the CIO sent a joint reply to Pres. Green, challenging the authority of the Executive Council to assume such dictatorial powers and declining to appear at the hearing.

PRES. DUBINSKY, who had been in Europe during July, arrived on Aug. 4 and proceeded immediately to the meeting of the Executive Council, which was to act on the charges against the CIO unions.

AT THE MEETING, Pres. Dubinsky made a last-minute appeal to its members on behalf of the ILGWU to defer action for three months until the next AFL convention in

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## COTTON DRESS MFRS. BALK AT ACCEPTING PRESIDENT'S ORDER

NEW YORK, Aug. 29, 1934 — While Administration officials in Washington sought to avert the textile strike, tentatively set for next week end, fresh difficulties for the NRA cropped up. Four thousand manufacturers operating under the Cotton Garment Code notified the President that they "cannot accept or acquiesce" in the executive order amending their code to increase wages 10 to 11 per cent, and reduce hours 10 per cent, to become effective on Oct. 1.

Following an all-day conference to consider the order amending the code, the manufacturers unanimously approved a resolution which called the President's action "unjustifiable, unwarranted, burdensome and inequitable."

This is the first time that any industry as a unit has aligned itself in opposition to an executive order, and none would comment on the resolution. But it was understood that if the President failed to modify the decree, the manufacturers are prepared to take their case into the courts, and that meanwhile the code authority would continue to operate the code in its present form.

It is held that the order "represents a complete and improper reversion of policy under the theory of voluntary code procedure."

The workers immediately challenged the manufacturers' contentions, and insisted that unless the President stands by the order, which has the force of law, they would strike.

David Dubinsky, president of the ILGWU, declared, "If they defy the Government we will enforce the order. We can even call a general strike; but I am confident the Government will enforce the order."

Behind the immediate conflict lies the much bigger problem, occasioned by the fact that a number of other manufacturing industries, among them other garment manufacturers, have become restive under their codes and appear ready to join the cotton garment makers if convinced that the latter really intend to fight to a finish against the Blue Eagle.

—LONDON MORNING POST

## ILG Chief Resigns From AFL Council Over Suspensions

NEW YORK, Sept. 2, 1936—David Dubinsky, president of the ILGWU, resigned yesterday as a vice president of the American Federation of Labor and thereby quit his post as a member of the federation's Executive Council.

Mr. Dubinsky's resignation, "to take effect immediately," was incorporated in a letter to William Green, president of the AFL. His reason was disagreement with the action of the Executive Council in suspending 10 international unions affiliated with the Committee for Industrial Organization. The suspensions, voted at the last meeting of the Executive Council in Washington on Aug. 5, are scheduled to become effective Saturday unless the unions leave the CIO.

—HERALD TRIBUNE

## REGISTRATION RULE IN NRA DRESS CODE HITS AT HIDEAWAYS

NEW YORK, Nov. 1, 1933—Pres. Franklin D. Roosevelt, in signing the dress code late yesterday, made the manufacturing of dresses, not only in New York but over the country, subject to NRA regulations. The effective date of the code is Nov. 13.

The code is the culmination of months of negotiations among the diverse factors making up a huge industry. Its basic rules, pertaining to hours of work, remain unchanged from those which have prevailed since the August strike.

"Limitation of contractors," a point of contention which delayed the signing of the pact a month or six weeks, is resolved by substitution of "registration" instead of "limitation." A record, even though it may be ever changing, will be available of all contractors employed by jobbers. This, it is felt, will do away with the "hide-away" shops where no standards could be expected to be observed.

All parties, in and out of New York, will be represented on the Dress Code Authority to be set up. Some 16 members will constitute this body at the beginning.

—WOMEN'S WEAR DAILY

## CONTRACTORS REBEL AT NEW 'KICKBACK' INVOKED BY JOBBERS

NEW YORK, Apr. 17, 1934 — A stoppage in 2,200 contractor plants in the dress industry in this city, affecting 50,000 workers, was ordered yesterday by the United Association of Dress Manufacturers, Inc., the contractors' organization. The move was in protest against alleged "chiseling" by the organization of jobbers, the National Dress Manufacturing Assn., and other violations of the dress code.

The stoppage was ordered after the all-day conference in the office of the Dress Code Authority attended by representatives of various factors in the industry, signatories to the Dress Code and to the various collective agreements in the industry.

In a statement last night David Dubinsky, president of the ILGWU, denounced the stoppage as a lock-out and ordered workers to report for work this morning in all shops that continue operation.

The main grievances of the contractors are that they have been compelled by the jobbers to submit to a "kickback" procedure, under which money paid to them for execution of contracts, in accord with the scale prescribed in the code, had to be returned in part to the jobber as a condition of obtaining additional work. They also charge that the jobbers failed to meet the provision governing compensation for overhead, under which the jobbers are called upon to reimburse contractors to the extent of 35 per cent for all labor costs.

—NEW YORK TIMES

## PHILA. DRESS STRIKE TOUCHES OFF ILG'S RECOVERY CAMPAIGN

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for a general strike in the dress industry. Within a week's time everything was set in motion and the strike was called on May 9.

The response of the dressmakers to the union's strike call was unparalleled in Philadelphia's women's garment history. The Communists made an attempt to create confusion and called a "strike" of their own, but that proved a dismal failure. The tie-up in the dress and waist industry was so complete that it left no alternative to the employers, and on the third day of the strike they invited the union to confer on terms of a settlement. Pres. Dubinsky came to Philadelphia to take charge of negotiations, which were concluded in one day.

The immediate gains of the strike were: union recognition, a 40-hour week and raises for all workers, an impartial machinery for the adjustment of disputes, and union representation in all shops.

The experience of Local 50 in 1933 was nothing short of resurrection. And most remarkable of all, perhaps, was the fact that the revival movement in the Philadelphia dress industry preceded by several months the general recovery movement which spurred on trade union activity all over the land and in our own International Union.

In a historic sense it became, therefore, the forerunner of the great strike movement in our industry, and its splendid example acted as an inspiration and a driving force for the leadership of the union in the other dress markets.

—ILGWU CONVENTION REPORT, 1934

## Between CIO Sessions



Miners' chief John L. Lewis and Pres. Dubinsky in informal chat during CIO Washington conference.

## Police Reserves Called To Subdue Boston Riot

BOSTON, Mar. 4, 1936—Catching the police off guard because of a misunderstanding, 2,000 striking garment workers swept into Kneeland St. shortly before 6 o'clock last night, tried to drag six women from a motor car and rioted for 20 minutes in the heavy homeward-bound traffic before reserves from all sections of the city could restore order.

It was the most serious outbreak of violence thus far in the nearly week-old strike of 4,500 men and women workers in the garment industry.

Between 25 and 30 men were injured and the police last night were trying to get the names of the women in the car which was rushed, in the event that any were seriously injured. Three arrests were made, including the leader of the strike, Philip Kramer, vice president of the ILGWU.

A total of seven were arrested during the day, all for assault and battery. Until the Kneeland St. rioting last night, most of the violence during the day was outside a large non-union shop on Shawmut Ave.

To protect his workers, the owner of the Shawmut Ave. shop started equity proceedings in Suffolk Superior Court yesterday and succeeded in drawing from the union an agreement not to resort to violence or threats pending a hearing on a temporary injunction tomorrow. The stipulation, however, does not exclude "peaceful" picketing, and applies only to the Shawmut Ave. establishment.

Inspectors Benjamin Goodman and William Goulston of the radical squad, and Lt. Harold Mitten were assured at about 5:30 o'clock last night by manufacturers that all workers in the non-union shops in the large garment building at 75 Kneeland St. had been dismissed for the day, including the force of mounted police, which has been very effective in keeping the crowds in the strike area scattered.

### Storm Kneeland St.

When there was hardly a handful of patrolmen left in the district, strikers stormed into Kneeland St. from Harrison Ave. and Tyler, Hudson and Harvard Streets. The police were not immediately alarmed, as they had been convinced all strike breakers and other workers were out of the area.

At about the same time a car drew up to the building at 75 Kneeland St. A few seconds later six women, alleged by the union to be strikebreakers, hurried out of the building and jumped into the car.

Before the door of the machine had closed, a score of strikers, all men, charged across Kneeland St. and surrounded the car.

### Sound Riot Call

Severe rioting then followed for the length of Kneeland St., from Harrison Ave. to beyond Hudson St., two blocks away. The riot call was sounded from the patrol box at Tyler St. and Harrison Ave., and reserves were rushed in patrol wagons and cruising cars into the area. At the height of the battle, Sgt. Henry Bailey, who then had only a few patrolmen at his command, ordered clubs drawn.

Later police bitterly criticized the manufacturers for giving them erroneous information that all workers had left the shops. Throughout the day the police, by frequent conferences with other manufacturers, had got all workers out of the Kneeland St. district unharmed and with only mild demonstrations.

—BOSTON HERALD

## TWO VICTORIES WON BY STRIKE LINES IN ILLINOIS, NORTHWEST

NEW YORK, May 15, 1935 — Two things have occurred in the past two weeks in the cotton dress fighting area which have cast a few bright rays upon the gritty, solemn battle lines on which thousands of women workers for months have been engaged, in as gruelling a fight for elementary human rights as any found in recent American industrial history.

First, came the reversal by the Illinois Court of Appeals of the temporary injunction issued to the Central Cotton Garment Manufacturers' Assn. by a Chicago judge—an injunction, by the way, which for a time actually paralyzed picketing in front of the strike-bound Chicago cotton dress firms.

Second, was the decision on May 3 by the Seattle Regional Labor Board, ordering the Olympic Garment Co. and Dolly Meyers, Inc., two firms being struck by the Seattle ILGWU locals, to allow the strikers to set up shop and grievance committees, to provide equal division of work in their shops, to take every striker back to work and to comply henceforth with Section 7A of the NRA.

In Seattle this decision is of particular significance in view of the fact that for the past month an anonymous "Committee of 500" has been carrying on a vicious Fascist fight against the union, mobilizing against our strikers all forces of reaction and black-guardism on the West Coast.

### Other Fights Hot

The fight still continues unabated in the other garment markets—in St. Louis, in Decatur, in Dallas—and will not terminate until settled on terms satisfactory to the strikers. By the same token, the organizing activity in Kansas City, Mo., will not be swept back by all the power, cunning or fury of the Jim Reeds and their henchmen.

Whatever the outcome of this struggle — and the outcome may not be alike in all places — the result will be deeply-rooted cotton garment workers' organizations everywhere. This conflict, indeed, has brought to the surface a trade-

—JUSTICE

## LaGuardia—and Labor—Out to Win



Scene at Madison Square Garden during 1937 election rally in behalf of American Labor Party candidate for mayor.

## Labor Party Formed to Aid Roosevelt, Lehman

In July, 1936, the ILGWU, together with representatives of many other unions in New York City, formed a New York State branch of the national Labor's Non-Partisan League for the Re-election of President Roosevelt. Subsequently, this organization took the name of the American Labor Party, though it retained its affiliation with the league.

First Vice Pres. Luigi Antonini was elected state chairman of the labor party in New York and has since continued at the helm of this organization. All our New York vice presidents and local managers took an active part in the campaign. Vice Pres. Nagler rendered especial-

ly valuable service as the director of the campaign in the Greater City. This initial move laid the groundwork for an extensive political activity which our union, together with other unions, carried on through the four months of 1936 in behalf of the re-election of President Roosevelt and of Gov. Lehman in New York. Our activity, however, was not confined to New York State alone.

### Other States Join

Acting on the appeal issued by Pres. Dubinsky concurrently with the call forwarded by the national Labor's Non-Partisan League, many of our subdivisions in other states joined state branches of the Non-Partisan League and came to be among its staunchest backers. In Massachusetts, New Jersey, Ohio, Illinois, Pennsylvania, as well as in Maryland and California, our unions were in the front ranks of the Labor's Non-Partisan League.

This keen political interest in independent labor political action, as far as New York and several other states are concerned, has survived the Presidential campaign. In New York City and in several other states ILGWU members who have enlisted either in the American Labor Party or in the state branches of the Non-Partisan League are going right ahead consolidating the gains they made in the last campaign and preparing for future activity.

Our International Union has, in addition to manpower and various other campaign resources, contributed about \$150,000 to the 1936 Presidential campaign, through the General Office and through its affiliates. Of this sum \$44,392 was paid in by the locals and individual members in New York alone, as initiation fees and per capita payments to the American Labor Party, which testifies to the widespread interest aroused by this movement.

—ILGWU CONVENTION REPORT, 1937

## Leading Figures in New York's Labor Party



Sen. Robert F. Wagner and Gov. Herbert H. Lehman, who will be endorsed by the Labor Party, meet with executive members of the organization. Left to right: Alex Rose, Wagner, Elinore Herrick, Lehman and Pres. Dubinsky.

# AFL CIO

(Continued from Page 4)

November, in Tampa. He emphasized the disastrous effect on the labor movement which might result from drastic action by the council. He likewise pledged himself to use his efforts with all the international unions affiliated with the CIO to the end that they would accept a decision by the AFL convention with regard to this controversy on the basis of a simple majority vote instead of the two-thirds vote required in questions involving constitutional changes, suspension and expulsion of unions.

PRES. DUBINSKY'S PLEA, however, failed to impress the members of the council, and by a vote of 13 to 1 (his own) the council decided to suspend the 10 unions affiliated with the CIO unless they withdrew from the body by Sept. 5.

ON AUG. 28, PRES. DUBINSKY sent a letter to Pres. Green notifying him of a decision by the GEB, taking issue with the Executive Council on the procedure followed in suspending the CIO unions, and reiterating the request that the Executive Council lift its suspension order and refer the matter to the AFL convention in November.

The letter said in part:

"We recognize that the punitive action of the council in this instance and its refusal to submit the controversy between itself and the international unions affiliated with the CIO to the next convention of the AFL are a grave violation of our rights, and we therefore cannot obey this decision even under threat of suspension. We would only comply with a decision of the Executive Council to withdraw from the CIO if such authority is conferred on it by a convention at which all international unions of the AFL are fully represented and given opportunity to voice their sides and opinions."

ON SEPT. 1, Pres. Dubinsky resigned as vice president of the AFL.

ON OCT. 16, HOWEVER, we received a notice of a joint meeting of the CIO and the Steel Workers Organizing Committee in Pittsburgh.

THE PITTSBURGH MEETING on Nov. 7 and 8, which divided its time equally between a CIO conference and a delegate meeting of the SWOC, however, did not advance the prospects of peace in the labor movement. An exchange of telegrams between John L. Lewis and William Green during the conference made it clear that both sides were irrevocably determined to proceed along the course which the events of the preceding nine months had shaped. Unfortunately, the ILGWU's suggestions at that meeting, urging a different approach with regard to shaping next steps in the controversy, were not received with favor and the GEB was disappointed with the attitude and action of the meeting.

AFTER THE MEETING was over, it became quite evident that delegates from the CIO unions would not be seated at the Tampa convention as no credentials were sent to them, and the GEB, therefore, decided not to send delegates to the Tampa convention.

THE DECISION OF THE TAMPA convention, which confirmed the action of the Executive Council in suspending the unions affiliated with the CIO, thereby legalized the extraordinary powers assumed by the council in August. Nothing has materialized in the way of peace since the Tampa convention.

From the foregoing account, you will have no difficulty observing that from the first day the CIO was launched, the ILGWU's interest in this organization has been not in the nature of division or confusion in the family of organized labor, but of constructive planning for more effective and more suitable methods of organization for the masses of unorganized workers in the basic industries.

It is on this proposition of progress and militancy in the labor movement that we choose to make our stand. Deeply convinced of the uprightness of our course and devoted as we are to the cause of unity in the family of organized labor, we have, therefore, from the outset hoped and worked unceasingly to bring about peace and reconciliation in its ranks. As we go along, our tactics shall remain unchanged. We shall continue to seek every possibility to make our contribution toward the attainment of peace with honor in the labor movement.

—ILGWU CONVENTION REPORT, 1937

## The Story Is the Same in Texas



It's police versus pickets as the strong fellows, with side arms and all, push back the garment workers out on strike in Dallas.

## Mass Labor Rally Demands Two-Year Extension of NRA

By EDWARD LEVINSON

NEW YORK, May 23, 1935 — One of the greatest labor demonstrations ever held here began this afternoon when workers throughout the city laid down their tools and marched to Madison Square Garden.

The huge rally, sponsored by the American Federation of Labor, was called to demand extension of the NRA for two years and to protest against the relief wage scale announced by President Roosevelt.

Garment workers, teamsters, longshoremen and members of 40 other trades began walking out some time before the meeting started at 3 o'clock.

While their exodus was orderly, it was the nearest thing to a general strike this city has ever seen.

Every seat in the Madison Square Garden arena and in the basement auditorium, which seats an additional 5,000 persons, was reserved for the meeting, and the seats began to fill up early.

Sen. Wagner was a chief speaker this afternoon on the urgent invitation of organized labor. Mayor LaGuardia also was to speak.

Flanking Wagner and LaGuardia was the AFL's top battery of orators.

They were William Green, president of the federation; John L. Lewis of the United Mine Workers; Sidney Hillman, head of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, and David Dubinsky, ILGWU president.

The demonstration was called originally for a three-fold purpose: to urge extension of the NRA, enactment of the Wagner labor disputes bill and approval of the Connery 30-hour-week bill.

—NEW YORK POST

# Forest City Pact Climaxes Violent 2-Year Struggle

ST. LOUIS, Nov. 25, 1935—The garment workers' strike at the Forest City Manufacturing Co., which began in July, 1933, was settled yesterday when an agreement was reached between company representatives and officers of the ILGWU.

About 1,000 employees at the St. Louis and Collinsville plants of the company are affected by the agreement, which became effective today. The strike arose over working conditions and recognition of the union.

Effective for two years, the agreement provides for arbitration of disputes, but not a closed shop. Simon Spitzer, vice president of the Forest City Co., said that while the company did not discriminate against employees because of "affiliation with any organization," it would be the policy of the company to operate an open shop.

Forest City was one of many Washington Ave. clothing manufacturers whose employees went out on strike, beginning July, 1933, because of union organizing under the National Recovery Act. The strike reached its peak with 3,300 employees of various firms out.

Frequent street clashes between strikers and other employees of the companies, and strikers and police, occurred during the strike. Hundreds of garment workers were ar-

rested and fined in the police courts for disturbances.

Some manufacturers began to recognize the union, reducing the number of strikers, while others continued to fight the closed shop clause. Settlement of the silk workers' strike was reached in September, 1933, when 1,500 returned to work under an agreement negotiated by the St. Louis Mediation Board.

An agreement was reached in the Forest City strike, Dec. 9, 1933, under the terms of which former employees were to be returned to work, and the union was granted the right of collective bargaining through representatives of their own choosing.

The strike was called again last February, however, the union alleging that 150 members, who had gone out on the first strike, had not been reinstated. Forest City plants were again picketed, and street disorders continued all through last summer and fall, resulting in frequent arrests and peace - disturbance charges between striking employees and others who were working.

—ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

## Cloak Union Wins Test of Strength; Agreement Signed Without a Strike

NEW YORK, July 15, 1935 — Without the loss of a day's work, the New York cloakmakers scored an outstanding victory on July 11, when all the employers' groups in the coat and suit industry signed the new collective agreements reached on the basis of Gov. Lehman's recommendations.

The Governor's proposal included the retention without change of the contractor designation clause and of the hours and wage schedules. On several other matters, such as price

settlement methods and uniformity of the work system, the contracting parties reached an understanding through conferences which took nearly a full week.

The renewal of the cloak agreements was the first test of union strength in any of our major industries since the early NRA days. To say the least, the ILGWU has passed this test with flying colors.

There was no question about it that, if put to the necessity of a general strike, the cloak workers in New York would have battered

their way through to a victory no matter how long it might have taken. Cloakmakers do not lose strikes — the only licking they have taken in the past 35 years was in 1926, when their destiny, for a brief spell, was in the hands of a Communist junta.

This year the cloakmakers would have fought, literally, to the last drop of their energy for contractor limitation and jobber responsibility, and most of the employers knew that from the outset. Gov. Lehman, no doubt, realized that when he counselled the manufacturers and the jobbers not to fight against the status quo.

—JUSTICE

# General Strike Threatens Dress Trade

By JULIUS HOCHMAN

NEW YORK, January, 1936—A general strike in New York's largest industry, involving 105,000 workers, is imminent.

Three years ago a collective agreement, won on the picket line and forced into the NRA code by the ILGWU's strength, gave us the 35-hour week, the guaranteed minimum wage, "industrial citizenship" as represented by the right to the job and a host of other conditions. High hopes swept even the older hands among the workers. We had lifted ourselves out of the sweatshop.

The "good faith" with which the employers, and particularly the jobbers, had affixed their signatures to the agreement remained absent in the industry.

Look at the record. Three major stoppages and 681 shop strikes. One stoppage in the \$3.75 and below lines, affecting 36,000 workers, took place in January, 1934, when the ink was scarcely dry on the agreement.

Planned as a dignified Supreme Court for the dress industry, our tribunal became a sort of petty, criminal court daily delving into cases of plain thievery. The chief officers of the union were compelled to spend days, weeks and months before the impartial chairman proving that a cheat was a cheat when the very facts told their own story.

Another subject of interest to students of bookkeeping magic is the "kick-back" where a jobber permits a contractor to smell money due him and his workers, but not to touch it. One jobber forced a contractor to sew pennies behind unnecessary buttons on the dresses so that the "kick-back" transaction would not appear on his books. When the contractor delivered the dresses, the jobber removed the pennies.

This industrial chaos can be traced to the jobber-contracting system.

A certain large jobber had 55 contractors working for him. Twelve of these were regularly employed and produced 85 per cent of his production. The other 43 received 15 per cent of his production and the signal honor of being used as a club to beat down prices for all.

In a group of 81 jobbers it was found that 37 per cent of the contractors handled 78 per cent of the work, while the other 63 per cent handled 22 per cent.

## Union Demands

The union has formulated a program to stabilize the dress industry. The union is convinced that the new agreement must include these three basic points:

1. Limitation of contractors.
2. Price settlement on the jobbers' premises.
3. The unit system of price settlement.

Under limitation, the jobber will be confined to the number of contractors he needs for his legitimate production. This number will be determined from an average of his production in recent seasons, and he will then be allowed the contractors he actually needs to produce his dresses.

To round out the effect of "limitation" on job security, it establishes the jobber as the real employer of the workers in contracting shops.

Under limitation no jobber will be able to take on a new contractor unless he can show that the growth of his business has provided him with enough work to supply that additional contractor.

Only when prices are settled on the jobbers' premises, before his dresses start on their travels among

the contractors, can the competition between contractor and contractor be eliminated and the stability dependent on equal labor costs be assured.

To eliminate still further any elements of doubt and speculation in the settlement of prices, we have devised the unit system. As worked out by the union, the unit system is a method of calculating the exact time it would take a worker to make a given dress.

In order to do this, the dress is split up into component parts.

In spite of constant changes in styles, certain parts are common to all dresses at all times. These fundamental parts are called a body. The time necessary to make the various possible body combinations has been studied. Another element in each dress, no matter the style, is the sleeve design. Some dresses have long sleeves, some have short sleeves; some have sleeves that are wide and open; some sleeves have cuffs, some are finished with piping or shirring. The time necessary to make all the various types of sleeves has been determined. The same thing is true of other "features" on a dress. There may be

pointed seams, scalloped yokes, pleats and ruffles. There may be trimmings, such as bows, sashes, straps, etc.

All these parts have been separately studied, and their time determined and listed in a schedule. To find how long it takes to make a dress under the unit system, all that is necessary is to consult the schedule for the body time, and for each additional item. The time is then totaled up and we arrive at the time it would take to make that dress.

## Same Rates Everywhere

The next step in the system is to translate the units into terms of money. The wage clauses of the agreement, which fix the value of time for the workers, then establish the piece rate for the dress. Thus workers in all shops everywhere will receive the same rates for the same amount of labor.

Why do we consider this program basic and paramount? It is because any agreement without it means warfare every day in the year. And we want to spend our time working, not fighting. If we have to fight, we will fight one general strike, and frame an agreement that will give us conditions that will assure us enforcement, that will bring us peace.

—"WHY THIS STRIKE?"

By DAVID SCHEYER

NEW YORK, Feb. 10, 1936—For three months the jobbers' organization, the National Association of Dress Manufacturers, the United Dress Manufacturers to which the contractors belonged, and the Affiliated, the association of "inside manufacturers" (who make dresses complete on their own premises)—all refused to meet with the union. So the ILGWU went ahead with its strike preparations, secure in the knowledge that it had a defense fund of \$1½ million and the unswerving loyalty of 100,000 dressmakers.

With the expiration of the agreement at hand the union was ready to act. The jobbers and contractors suddenly began screaming in anguish as they saw a stoppage coming just at the peak of the season. They ran to Mayor LaGuardia. They ran to the newspapers. And finally they ran to the union to find out just how little they could give.

Meanwhile the three employers' associations have become five. The jobbers of cheap dresses left the National to form the Popular Price Assn. Similarly, the contractors in the low-priced line organized the Interstate Assn. The old contractors' group, the United, is on its way out. At its last meeting, a meeting packed with strong-arm men hired from private detective agencies, with the platform guarded by a platoon of police, the elected officials were stripped of power and a clique took over.

For two weeks now the weary-eyed, tired-voiced committee of the union—Dubinsky, Hochman, Zimmerman, Antonini and others—has been sitting through endless nights of conferences trying to discover some responsible group to bargain

with. The disintegration, the clash of interests, and the sheer stupidity of the employers have made an agreement almost impossible—impossible, that is, without the purgative of a general strike.

## Union Won't Retreat

The Joint Board of the ILGWU alone has shown a sense of responsibility in this maelstrom. It has sought every possible means to avoid a strike that would be tremendously costly not only to the workers but to New York's economic life as well. One thing it has not done and will not do—abate demands for bringing a decent life to the dressmakers and order to the industry.

On Feb. 3, when Dubinsky and Hochman reported to a meeting of 5,000 shop chairmen at Manhattan Opera House, it seemed that some agreement might be reached, but negotiations broke down. The union then acted. On Feb. 7, 20,000 dressmakers in Madison Square Garden gave their mandate in the ceaseless chant, "We want a strike!" Hurriedly the employers renewed negotiations. It would be a good thing if the union demands could be won in conference, but if they cannot, the whirl of 50,000 sewing machines will be stilled in the greatest strike New York has ever known.

—THE NATION, Feb. 19, 1936

## Dressmakers Mass Their Might in Tremendous Garden Rally



When contractors rebelled against kickbacks to jobbers early in 1934, N.Y. dressmakers rallied at Madison Sq. Garden to voice their stand.

## Dubinsky Named Dem Elector from N. Y. State

NEW YORK, Sept. 17, 1936—The choice of David Dubinsky, who yesterday denied that he is a Communist, as one of the Democratic electors for New York seemed likely today to become an issue of importance in the state campaign. Many regular Democrats were found to be dis-

pleased at the idea of having to vote for such a well-known radical, even though the office is mainly honorary.

This afternoon, Melvin C. Eaton, Republican state chairman, renewed his attack upon Mr. Dubinsky, saying that the Democrats will find it hard to explain away the gifts that Mr. Dubinsky is sending to the "Anarchist-Communist-Socialist Government in Spain."

Mr. Dubinsky is the chief figure in a campaign to raise \$100,000 for Spanish Loyalists. He has denied reports, published in this connection, that he is a Communist. Stating that \$78,000 has already been collected for the fund, Dubinsky declared its purpose is to provide medical care and hospitalization for wounded fighters on the government's side.

Mr. Dubinsky, president of the ILGWU, and a leading figure in John L. Lewis's Committee for Industrial Organization, recently resigned from the Socialist Party. He said he did so in order to be free to support the President. He announced his resignation from the party, of which he had been a member since 1911, on Apr. 22, saying that he was impelled to quit not only because of his desire to support Mr. Roosevelt but because Norman Thomas, leader of the party's left wing, was taking it too close to the Communists. He assailed Communists bitterly at that time, and said that experience showed that cooperation with them "has spelled disaster for the labor movement," referring to the expulsion from the ILGWU of a dis-

ruptive Communist faction some years ago.

Though his home is in New York City, Mr. Dubinsky has been made an elector to represent a district including a section of Buffalo and eight small residential suburbs of that city. Eaton asserted last Friday that James A. Farley, state Democratic chairman, had "planted" Mr. Dubinsky up the state because his radicalism was not so well known there as here, and Erie County Democrats would not resent so much his representing their party as local ones who would not consider him really a colleague.

—NEW YORK TIMES

## Mayor Fails to Avert Mammoth Dress Walkout; ILG Has \$1,000,000 Fund

NEW YORK, Feb. 7, 1936—Mayor La Guardia's efforts to avert the threatened strike of 105,000 dressmakers in New York and nearby communities appeared to have failed yesterday. The strike is expected to go into effect Monday.

Today the 68,000 dressmakers employed in the New York market will stop work shortly after noon for what union leaders termed a "dress rehearsal" for the walkout.

More than 20,000 of these workers will crowd into Madison Square Garden, where a strike vote will be taken and final instructions for the walkout given. Several thousand others will meet at Palm Garden. The surplus thousands will listen to the proceedings over the radio.

Thirty-three halls have been en-

## UNDERWEAR WORKERS BEAT DOWN ATTEMPT TO CUT WAGE BY \$2

NEW YORK, Oct. 15, 1935 — The settlement reached in the underwear industry, after weeks of negotiations between the White Goods Workers' Union and the three employers' groups, is a distinct achievement for the union. In the face of present conditions in the trade it seems hardly possible that better terms could have been obtained by the workers even after a hard-fought strike.

Positive gains scored in the new agreement include a 5 per cent wage increase and the right to examine employers' records to insure strict enforcement of union work conditions in contracting shops. Of no less significance, however, is the fact that the union defeated a stubborn attempt by the employers to impose a 40-hour work-week and a \$2 wage cut on the industry.

—JUSTICE

## Minneapolis Mixup



A fast exchange between striker and scab, June, 1937.

## Strike Boosts Strength of Cotton Union in Boston

BOSTON, May 1, 1936—The Boston cotton dress and underwear strike just concluded not only made a breach in the stone wall of opposition to unionism which characterized the Boston cotton garment market for years, but it also established some interesting precedents in strike conduct and strike settlement.

Boston, a city with a "hard-boiled" conscience which is rarely stirred by the misery of its toiling masses, had to be awakened to the lot of its underprivileged cotton garment workers, nearly all of whom are women. Spectacular appeals were used to dramatize their plight and made front-page news in a usually callous press. The battle which these girls, until now strangers to unionism, put up on the picket lines aroused the more enlightened groups of Boston citizenry to form a committee to aid the union's war upon the sweatshop.

Even more significant was the settling of the strike. Having failed to make a dent in the strikers' lines after weeks of combat, a group of the more belligerent employers, following an old custom, struck at the workers with an application for an injunction. This move, which looked to them an easy way out, brought unexpected results. Instead of a restraining writ, Judge Thomas J. Hammond actually ordered the settlement of the strike on terms

which the workers found quite acceptable.

The terms included a 40-hour week, equal distribution of work, a minimum wage scale, non-interference with union activity in any manner, and an arbitration machinery for settlement of disputes.

The most valuable result of the strike, however, remains the formation of a strong cotton garment local, which is continually gaining in membership and is spreading its influence to all shops, union and non-union. This is by far the best asset inherited from the recent conflict, as it points to the early unionization of the entire cotton garment industry in Boston.

—JUSTICE

## \$5,000 Gift Bought Medicine in Spanish War, Dubinsky Says

NEW YORK, Oct. 5, 1936—David Dubinsky, president of the ILGWU, accused John M. Hamilton, Republican national chairman, of Fascist sympathies today.

Replying to Hamilton's charge that he is a Communist and should be removed as a Democratic elector in New York State because "he collected money for the Spanish civil war," the union leader said the \$5,000 sent by his union went to the Labor Red Cross with the stipulation that it be spent exclusively for medicines, food and clothes.

Under the same logic by which he was accused of Communism, Dubinsky said, Herbert Hoover could be accused similarly for relief work in Russia in 1919-20.

—PLATTSBURGH (N. Y.) REPUBLICAN

## Locked in Battle



A tense moment in the defense of a garment picket line in Atlanta, June, 1937.

## Firm Must Divide Gain Derived from Latest Machinery

NEW YORK, May 1, 1936 — A decision which should attract wide attention in labor and industry circles was rendered the other day by Dr. N. I. Stone, special arbitrator in a case involving effects of introduction of new machinery by a large housedress and bathrobe firm in the New York market.

In substance, the decision establishes the principle that benefits accruing to a manufacturer from the introduction of new machinery should not be absorbed by the manufacturer only, but that the workers are to share equally in these benefits.

In the specific case which Dr. Stone arbitrated, the increase in production resulting from machinery improvement was evaluated at 14 per cent. The award accordingly gave the workers an increase of 7 per cent over their earnings prior to the introduction of the improved implements.

On the surface of it, and without any wish to magnify its importance, this decision approaches closer to a solution of one troublesome aspect of technological progress than we have been able to observe in worker-employer relations anywhere. Labor, in principle and as a matter of industrial policy,

does not and should not oppose implemental and machinery progress. It does, however, strenuously oppose the absorption of benefits accruing from improved machinery by the employers alone. In this sense, Dr. Stone's award is rational and sound.

What concerns the other grave aspect of technological improvement—the displacement of workers by new machinery—obviously can be solved only by the shortening of work hours, a demand which organized labor is vigorously and incessantly contending for.

—JUSTICE



# Blue Dale Dress Ordered Back to New York Market

NEW YORK, Dec. 30, 1936—Declaring that labor union contracts, strictly enforced, have become a necessity with the end of the NRA, Supreme Court Justice Philip J. McCook today ordered two "runaway" dress firms to return to N. Y.

The companies were directed to bring back their machinery, which was moved to Archbald, Pa., during a strike, and to pay back wages to several hundred New York workers thrown out of employment.

"The logic of the situation calls for the application of strong measures," the judge said. "With the end of the NRA there appeared a new need for such contracts as the one in the suit.

"Without a remedy as wide as that need, unscrupulous employers of labor will be tempted to play one community off against another, unlawfully depriving New York City of her business and her inhabitants of their livelihood."

The defendants were the Blue Dale Dress Co., Inc., and the Blue Fox Dress Co. and their officers.

The injunction suit was brought by David Dubinsky, president of the ILGWU, and Philip Kapp, treasurer of the Joint Board, Dressmakers' Union.

Last February the union signed a three-year agreement with a dress manufacturers' association which the defendants joined two months later. It forbade the members to move outside the 5-cent carfare zone or to resort to lockouts.

Several hundred employees went on strike Oct. 19. Ten days later the plants were moved to Archbald, near Scranton, Pa., although the offices were kept here.

The defendants contended they had left New York because of the strike but it was shown in court they had leased the Archbald plant Oct. 10, nine days before the strike was called.

Julius Hochman, general manager of the Dress Joint Board, hailed the decision as a victory for organized labor. The verdict upholds the principle that collective bargaining is necessary to attain stability in an industry, he said.

—WORLD TELEGRAM

## Dress Union Wins Key Pact Demands Without Fighting

NEW YORK, Mar. 1, 1936 — The dressmakers of New York have won their major demands without a strike. They have won more through negotiation, it is asserted in some quarters, than they could have hoped to gain through a costly strike.

The Dressmakers' Union carried the day not because the employers' camp was pretty badly divided, but in spite of it. It might have been a good deal easier to negotiate terms with fewer associations pulling at cross purposes. Chiefly, however, the dress workers swept the field because they showed up in January, 1936 with a drum-tight, armed-to-the-hilt union.

The three huge successive Madison Square Garden demonstrations — bubbling over with exuberant militancy and thundering the demand of countless thousands for a new deal in control and enforcement of labor terms — convinced the industry that the dress union is a mobile army of the march and caught the fancy of a quickened public opinion.

—JUSTICE

## Charge GOP Leader Manufacturing Red Scare to Get Votes

Politics reaches a fantastic height of absurdity in the effort of Chairman Hamilton of the Republican National Committee to persuade Mr. Roosevelt that the only way in which he can convince the country that he is not a Communist would be to inaugurate an old-fashioned raid on the "Reds" in the 1919 manner. He further declares that David Dubinsky, president of the ILGWU, is as good as a Communist because his union contributed to the "Communists in Spain."

In view of Dubinsky's own record in fighting Communism in his union, this is a rather loose sort of proof, especially since many people not in sympathy with Communism have contributed to the cause of popular democratic government in Spain in its fight against a Fascist military reaction.

But Mr. Hamilton is new at the niceties of social theory and international politics and may be excused on these grounds. What he ought not to be forgiven, at any rate by his fellow-Republicans, is his naivete in believing that votes can be manufactured by playing with dangerous nonsense about a "Red" scare. Mr. Roosevelt has already exhibited his skill in making prey of such attacks, and a really smart opposition would drop the whole thing, if only because the public is very little interested.

—BALTIMORE SUN, Oct. 7, 1936

## PRINTZ-BIEDERMAN IN CLEVELAND SIGNS 'MODEL' AGREEMENT

NEW YORK, Dec. 22, 1936—The president of the ILGWU made public today the new agreement reached between the union and the Printz-Biederman Co., coat and suit manufacturers of Cleveland, which the union president declared is a considerable advance over the contract expiring Jan. 1. The new agreement will run until Sept. 30, 1939, and was declared by Pres. Dubinsky to be a model contract. He paid tribute to Louis Stulberg, assistant manager of Cutters' Local 10, New York, for his efforts in negotiating the agreement.

The union president said the contract amicably reached with Alexander Printz, head of the firm, improves on the original agreement reached last year after the Printz-Biederman Co. had operated non-union for 25 years.

Under the new contract the ILGWU agrees to the continuation of a separate local known as Local 200 for workers employed in the shops of Printz-Biederman, its subsidiary and contracting shops. The agreement provides that check studies shall be made where the workers feel that piece prices are not satisfactory. Such checks shall be subject to the approval of the committee of workers.

—WOMEN'S WEAR DAILY

# 91% of Employers Belong to Cloak Recovery Board

WASHINGTON, June 27, 1936—On June 16, just one year after the expiration of the National Industrial Recovery Act, whose main provisions had previously been knocked out by the Supreme Court, the National Coat and Suit Industry Recovery Board held its first annual meeting

## AFL Body Ignores Dubinsky Proposal On Reuniting CIO

WASHINGTON, Oct. 8, 1936—Without commenting on the controversy with the unions affiliated with the Committee for Industrial Organization, the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor today formally accepted the resignation of David Dubinsky, president of the ILGWU, from the council membership which he held as a vice president of the federation.

It was Mr. Dubinsky who, in a recent address at a union convention in New York, intimated that a way might be found to settle the dispute between the federation and the CIO and restore the CIO unions to their former standing in the federation.

Today's action of the council, however, did not indicate that the suggested negotiations had progressed very far, and the only comment of William Green, president of the federation, was that Mr. Dubinsky's "expression in favor of settlement intensifies the possibility of settlement."

—HERALD TRIBUNE

in Washington. It celebrated as the "only functioning voluntary code organization in the United States." Employer associations and the unions performed the feat together.

Climax of the meeting was the announcement that management and labor had agreed to a program for jointly stimulating the industry's market. A council of business development will be created. Besides industry representatives, its labor members will be David Dubinsky, president of the ILGWU, and Isidore Nagler, general manager of the Joint Board of the Cloakmakers' Union, New York.

## Revolutionary Move

The move marks a revolution in the industry. The International is a mighty and shrewdly managed institution. Of its 200,000 total members, some 45,000 are in the cloak and suit trade.

Most powerful is the International's grip on the coat and suit trade. Labor requirements here are exacting. Men form 88 per cent of members in this group. They are craftsmen, old hands at the business, and they are not under pressure from new workmen since few youngsters want to be tailors. Further, shops are concentrated in large towns, under the strictest supervision for style and appearance. Hence, this industry has escaped competition from "runaway shops" which go outside the cities to draw labor from among farm and small-town girls.

But Dubinsky wanted to cut the high mortality rate of garment companies. During the pre-code pow-wows, they heard shop owners describe malpractices of trade which made stabilization impossible. They helped strengthen practice provisions of the cloak code.

Barring the usual frictions, the industry liked the code. Employers were appalled at the possible return of cat-and-dog competition when all NRA codes were killed on May 27, 1935. In desperation they retained a skeleton code organization, finally deciding to change the name of the authority and continue as a voluntary group.

Expiration date of NIRA was June 16. By July 15 the National Coat and Suit Industry Recovery Board had replaced the Blue Eagle with the "consumers' protection label."

At the Washington gathering, Alexander Printz, chairman of this "little NRA," announced that 91 per cent of the industry's 1,800 employers were affiliated, that its standards of trade practices and employment had been maintained nationally. Seventeen million of the labels have been used on coats and suits. Women's clubs and consumer organizations that claim a membership of 5,000,000 have aided in promoting the label as a symbol of good working conditions.

—BUSINESS WEEK

## No Tea Party



Boston police are no more gentle in breaking up picket lines than are cops in other cities.

# NEWS-HISTORY

## Editorials

### Memorable Four Years

When 1933 dawned upon America, two piercing facts confronted the ILGWU: the country, frustrated economically and politically, was ready for a new social era, the full import of which not even President-elect Roosevelt was able to fathom, while our union was marking up in a mood of utter depression a record low on its organizational thermometer since the fateful days of 1910.

Less than four months later, a tornado-like sweep of fresh air rocked the country. FDR was at the helm overhauling our archaic financial setup, "codifying" industry and dishing out a "New Deal" to the country, with a thumping emphasis on labor. The stupor of the "Hoover Debacle" was rapidly vanishing.

The new current hit the ILGWU full force. In May, the Philadelphia dressmakers struck and won a "new deal" for themselves in a few days, a union contract with no ifs or buts. Pres. David Dubinsky, only one year on the ILGWU bridge, greeted the Recovery Act warmly but declared that "without strong unions the NRA may not be of great or permanent good to the American wage earners."

Within a half year, our International has made good on Pres. Dubinsky's verdict. One after another, the non-union jungle spots in New York were swept clean by a reinvigorated, disciplined ILGWU.

ILGWU standing, meantime, rose in the labor movement as Pres. Dubinsky was chosen a member of the AFL Executive Council in Oct. 1934, at San Francisco, and the union's membership was reaching the quarter-million mark. In 1936, the ILGWU took a leading part in forming the American Labor Party in New York, to help elect FDR to a second term. Pres. Dubinsky became a Presidential elector in that year's campaign.

To sum up: In this fourth year of our near-miraculous recovery, the "union of the garment workers," as our anthem tags us, is riding high on the tail end of a "New Deal" that has lost most of its initial spurt and tempo. To many of us these four years seem like 40, so much have we gone through in this brief span of time.

### "It's the Law!"



—Kirby in World-Telegram

### Jobber Policy Is 'Kickback' In New Form

NEW YORK, Dec. 22, 1936—The present rigid system of arriving at labor prices through the method of submitting samples to a price adjustment bureau has resulted in a new type of circumvention that is said to be a member of the "kickback" family. While it does not involve secret payments of moneys to offset the established prices, the results are very much the same.

According to contractors, jobbers who wouldn't think of exacting money kickbacks have come to insist that they want a better type of workmanship than that which is bargained for at the time the garment is put through the price adjustment process.

#### CHISELING ON LABOR

For instance, a garment might be figured to have six buttons whereas in truth and in fact the jobber expected that the garment should have 12 buttons. Once the style has been before the hard-working officials of the price adjustment bureau, and the amount of labor involved has been measured as well as you can measure such an indefinite product, and the price that labor is to command is set down, and the total cost of the labor is settled, then comes the demand that the contractor be a magician and supply a greater amount of labor.

This is not confined to the low-priced dresses as far as can be learned, but runs into the medium and higher priced items as well. Contractors say that they are expected to be able to "sell" the union workers on the idea that their union really figures dresses too high, and that it is for the good of all concerned that greater values are put forth, and a little extra work from the workers will work out better in the long run.

#### IN CAHOOTS

The contractor is supposed to hold out to the workers in his shop that the jobber will not be able to supply much more work if something of the sort is not indulged in to keep him happy.

Once the door is opened to such tactics, it is hard to close it again on them. Like most kinds of circumvention the amount of extra work expected begins by being a little and gradually is stepped up until both the contractors and workers are hard put to know exactly what to do about it.

The average worker is more union-minded than the average contractor is organization-minded, and here and there the contractor "steams up" the workers to make a kick so that the contractor indirectly may benefit.

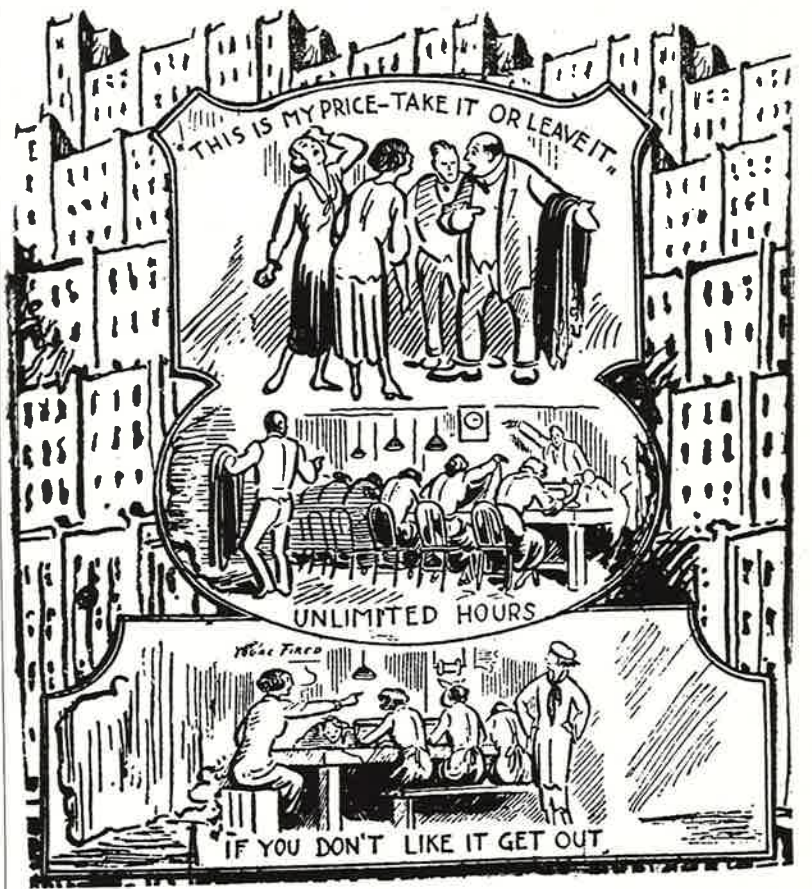
#### UNION AGGRESSIVE

As a matter of fact, the current attempt to have work divided equally is due pretty much to the aggressiveness of the union. This is not because the contractors' organization is unwilling to tackle the problem, but because the average contractor has not the courage to lodge a genuine complaint against his jobber.

Many a jobber, and an inside manufacturer for that matter, is being required by the union to divide work equally among all his employees, just as though the workers of the contracting plants were sitting alongside the inside shop workers. Of course there are allowances for special types of work, but the results are very drastic in comparison with former years.

—WOMEN'S WEAR DAILY

### "Last Stronghold of the Sweatshop"



—Art Young in American Federationist

## British M. P. Joins Cleveland Struggle

By ELLEN WILKINSON  
(Was Member of British Parliament)

CLEVELAND, Apr. 1, 1935—Cleveland is an immense manufacturing town on the shores of Lake Erie, engineering chemicals and clothing being the chief industries. I tumbled out of the train and was rushed off to the dressmakers' strike. The ILGWU is organizing the "sweatshops" here with the solid backing of the AFL.

It had seemed impossible to organize them—Italians, Poles, Slovaks—every country in Europe was represented. But the efficiency expert did the trick. A high-spirited girl, an Italian with the rare type of beauty that Paul Veronese loved to paint (I told her that, and she said, "Who's he?") joined the union and brought the Italians with her. A keen young Jewess found the senior clerk in tears—fired by the efficiency expert because she was 40! These two girls led the rest.

Union recognition, end of the inhuman speed-up and firings, the union wage—this was the strike program. Only a third of the workers were in the union when the strike was called.

The employers got an injunction against picketing so that only a few pickets were allowed at a time. The city massed its police, but the employer hasn't got one blackleg (scab) yet. The girls fought police, justices, injunctions, blacklegs, and won the admiration of the town.

After a fine meeting with them I offered to join the picket line. They were already on the job when I arrived at 7 o'clock next morning. The pickets had to keep moving, so they formed an endless chain, like convicts in the exercise yards, and they marched round three abreast, singing songs they had made up during the five weeks' struggle.

We had marched round for a couple of hours in the rain, the cold wind from Lake Erie cutting through the thin clothes of the girls. A taxi drew up. A supercilious, well-dressed man got out.

"There he is," screamed the girls.

It was the efficiency expert. He was determined to get into the works. The police surrounded him, but the girls got him. His tie, his collar, his scarf and his hat disappeared among the crowd. The mounted police rode up. "Back to the doors," yelled Friend, the chief organizer of the union. The great doors opened outward. If we pressed against them no one could open them. The police horses were ridden up to us.

Queer, despite all the struggles one has been in—suffrage, Socialist, trade union—one never quite loses that dreadful sinking feeling as the police horses first close in—and the American police horse isn't the carefully trained English type.

A girl went under the hoofs and screamed. Friend saw our danger but couldn't reach us. Mrs. Gallagher, the woman organizer, was leading the attack on the efficiency expert. To rescue us, the chief organizer did a very brave thing. He gathered a group of men and led a charge on the foot police.

The mounted police turned and charged back. Truncheons descended on Friend's head. His collar and coat shoulders were soon soaked in blood, but we women were released from the awful pressure of horses' bodies jamming us against the doors.

The chief organizer was taken off by the police. His quiet wife, a supremely self-possessed, good-looking woman, who was helping in the strike, went too, but not without issuing quick orders that pulled the picket line together, and we continued our march.

Solidarity forever!  
It's the union makes us strong!  
—NEW DAWN, London