

The Present Situation in New Bedford

By ALBERT WEISBORD

The New Bedford Strike is now eleven weeks old. There is not a break in the ranks. The 56 mills employing approximately 26,000 workers are closed tight. The strike is 100% effective.

Not only is the strike 100% effective but the ranks of the workers are actually growing stronger. This is shown in the following ways:

1. Growth of the picket lines. Whereas before we found hundreds, now thousands at times mass before the mills.

2. Better spirit at the mass meetings. More cheering and singing.

3. A more substantial organization has been built up—the New Bedford Textile Workers Union—with due stamps and regular union forms. Thus against the old small union of the A. F. T. O. taking in only the few skilled workers, there is a new union—the New Bedford Textile Workers Union—for the great mass of workers.

4. A stronger strike committee has been built up, and far greater discipline and union understanding established.

5. New demands have been put up. The demands now are as follows:

1. Abolition of the 10% wage cut.
2. 20% increase in wages over the old scale.
3. 40-hour 5-day week.
4. Abolition of the speed-up.
5. Equal pay for equal work.
6. No discrimination against union members.
7. Recognition of the union.

6. The left wing leadership has grown in influence. More and more honest workers belong to the American Federation of Textile Operatives come on our

picket lines, come to our mass meetings and join our union.

7. Strata of workers hitherto not reached by us are being brought into the struggle more and more.

8. Relief work is now better managed than before.

Against this upward swing of the strike, the reformists have strongly mobilized: (1) The A. F. T. O. officials joined the A. F. of L. so that both sets of reactionary officials could combine against the new union affiliated to the National Textile Mill Committees. (2) The Socialist Party has actively and vigorously allied itself with these misleaders of the United Textile Workers and does all in its power to crush the left wing.

In the meantime the spirit of the New Bedford strike is steadily spreading and affecting other places. In Fall River especially the workers are growing very restive because: (1) Fall River is near New Bedford. (2) The same conditions prevail there as in New Bedford. (3) The Fall River Workers also received a 10% wage cut. (4) The workers are of the same nationalities and closely bound to the workers in New Bedford. (5) Many mills in Fall River are doing scab work for the New Bedford mills.

The National Textile Mill Committees has already opened up an office in Fall River and has sent in organizers. Many workers have already joined the Fall River unit. Every indication is that the workers in Fall River will also begin to fight actively under the slogans put out by the Left Wing: Fight Wage Cuts and Support the New Bedford Strike. If this happens, then watch the textile workers.