

BIG BATTLES FOR NEEDLE WORKERS

Fighting Abilities Are Greater Than Ever

By ROSE WORTIS

January, 1930, marks the first year of the existence of the Needle Trades Workers Industrial Union.

Twelve months are not a long period in the life of a labor organization, but these past 12 months have been months of storm and stress, of grave and bitter struggle, during which the Union has stood the acid test and has more than justified its existence.

The Needle Trades Workers Industrial Union was born as a result of the bitter class struggle of the needle trades workers, and its very first day it plunged headlong into the midst of the struggle, demonstrating its readiness and ability to lead its workers in the needle trades against their class enemies and for the improvement of their working standards and conditions.

Struggle Against Bureaucrats

The struggle against the reactionary bureaucracy, which began in 1926, had weakened and undermined the organization of the needle trades workers. The bosses, working hand in hand with the right wing bureaucracy of the A. F. of L., hoped that at least they would break the fighting spirit of the needle trades workers. But the organization of the Industrial Union proved to the bosses that instead of defeating the workers, instead of paralyzing their militancy, the struggle had merely taught the workers that if they are to fight effectively for their interests they must build a new union as an instrument for class struggle instead of class collaboration.

The strike of the dressmakers, which the Industrial Union carried through immediately upon its inception, aroused the worst fears of the bosses. They realized that the decadent bureaucracy of the needle trades—the Schlesingers, the Dubinskys—could not beat the workers into submission, and they decided to take direct leadership of the struggle, using the company union as their tool. It is now an openly admitted fact, even by the bosses themselves, in official statements by their spokesman, Mr. Klein, the manager of their Industrial Council, that the subsequent fake strike conspiracy in the cloak trade was planned and carried through by the bosses, Schlesinger and his henchmen merely doing their bidding as their willing agents.

Through this maneuver, the bosses had temporarily succeeded in beating the cloakmakers into seeming submission, but the conditions of the workers resulting from this fake strike became so degrading, the speed-up system, the long hours and inhuman treatment so intolerable, the wages so miserable, that the discontented cloakmakers became fully aware of the fraud perpetrated against them and are now beginning gradually to awaken from their passivity and will sooner or later give expression to this discontent by an open revolt against the conditions of slavery forced upon them by the bosses and their agents.

Coming Struggles.

These struggles of the past year have been but the prelude to the important struggles that are facing the needle trades workers during the coming year. The supreme task of the Industrial Union during the coming weeks will be in the dress trade, which today is the most important branch in the ladies garment industry, employing tens of thousands of workers who are subjected to the most ruthless exploitation. As a result of the treachery of the company-union, the dress trade is at the present time largely unorganized. Conditions are unbearable. The workers are discontented and ripe for organization.

Company Unions Real Danger.

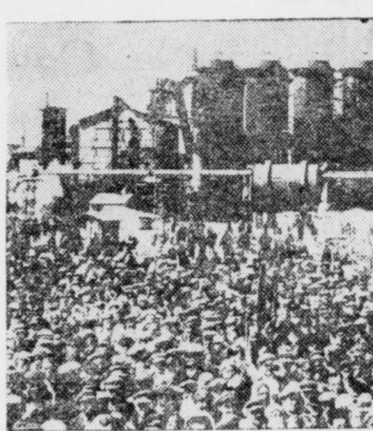
The bosses and the company-union, aware of these activities of the Industrial Union and seeing the spectre of defeat and annihilation once the mass of the dressmakers come under the leadership of the left wing Union, are exerting all their efforts to take advantage of this growing discontent of the dressmakers and lead them into the folds of the company union through a fake strike maneuver. The whole reactionary machine of the A. F. of L., the yellow socialist party, the bosses and the State authorities, is now directed against the dressmakers. They know that their company-union, in the cloak field will collapse like a house of cards, and they are trying to bolster up their company union and stave off impending bankruptcy by further acts of treachery against the workers.

The dress field, during the coming few weeks, will be the scene of the most severe and decisive struggle, of great moment, not only to the needle trades workers, but to the entire militant labor movement. The workers, under the leadership of the Industrial Union, will have to face and defeat the most concentrated attack of the combined forces of the enemy. The dress trade is the strategic battle front for the Industrial Union. The dressmakers have been the target of the most vicious attacks. They have withstood all the attacks in the past and in the coming battle will no doubt prove true to their fighting traditions.

Rally Behind the Industrial Union.

The Needle Trades workers have been the advance guard of the militant workers for many years, and in

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STRENGTHEN METHODS of P

Our Communist Party Units and I

By H. BENJAMIN.

FOR large and growing numbers of New York workers, Leninism is no longer an abstract theory. Through long and bitter struggles waged in the citadel of the most arrogant imperialism in the world, increasing masses of workers have had the opportunity of seeing that the correct application of the principles and tactics of Leninism is the only means for effective action in support of the immediate as well as the general revolutionary interests of the working class.

The sixth Lenin Memorial will therefore serve to bring together large numbers of New York workers in a mighty demonstration against imperialism and imperialist war. It will reflect the working influence and strength of the party of Lenin—the Communist Party of the U. S. A. in the New York District.

Workers who have learned in the course of struggles to organize against the intolerable conditions under which we are exploited in all industries, that only the Communist Party can give correct leadership to these struggles. There are now entering our ranks scores of Negro workers. We are drawing into our ranks Latin American, Chinese and workers of other colonial and semi-colonial countries who see only our Party waging a relentless struggle against every manifestation of Imperialism. Our forces are being strengthened by the addition of large numbers of native workers, of women and young workers from the large shops in the basic industries.

Fight the Renegades

Our Party is now politically oriented to the deep crisis of capitalism. We have excluded from our ranks those renegade elements who became the agents of social imperialism and the apologists for Hoovers' "prosperity." With them, have gone a considerable section of those elements who resented the fact that they must disturb themselves, abandon old methods of work, old habits, and stir out of their state of apathy.

We must root our Party more deeply in the factories. Our fractions in unions and mass organizations must become real instruments for politicalizing the masses of workers amongst whom they operate and for drawing these workers into the general political struggles which are necessary for this period. Our struggle against imperialist war; for the defense of the Soviet Union and in support of the revolutionary struggles of the colonial masses can become really effective and assume revolutionary form only if we are able to take these struggles into the factories and especially those factories where war materials are produced; onto the waterfronts from which the war materials are shipped and upon

this coming struggle it is the duty of the entire left wing movement to rally to the support of the Industrial Union. A defeat of the company-union in the needle trades will be a turning point for the entire left wing movement. The Needle Trades Workers Union during the past year has proven its ability, despite all mistakes and short-comings, to lead the workers in struggle against the common enemy.

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