

The Passaic Strike a Lesson in Solidarity

By BEN GITLOW.

INHUMAN conditions, starvation wages, savage exploitation and wage cuts have caused the revolt of the Passaic textile workers. Over 12,000 of them have quit the mills. The gigantic mills are silent and inactive, mute sentinels to the bitter industrial war that daily goes on around them. This is the eighth week of a strike that will go down in history as one of American labors' big and important struggles. Thus far every attempt of the mill owners to crush and defeat the workers has failed.

Picket Line Firm.

The picket line holds firm in the face of brutal police arrests, mounted cossacks, riot guns and gas bombs. Every day finds thousands of workers on the picket lines. On bitter cold days, in driving snowstorms, poorly clad with torn shoes and just a cup of coffee and a bun for breakfast, you can see men, women and children strikers picketing the mills, shouting and singing with a spirit of determination that cannot be conquered.

The heroic struggle of these abused, underpaid toilers is focusing on them the attention of the entire country. These textile strikers are inspiring and arousing the workers in the United States, particularly the unorganized and especially those working in the textile industry.

The significance of the Passaic textile strike lies in the fact that it is a strike of unorganized workers in an industry that is almost wholly unorganized and employs almost 1,000,000 workers. The Passaic workers are the ones who have challenged the wage-cutting campaign of the textile barons. Every one of the million unorganized textile workers knows this. The abominable conditions that prevail in Passaic prevail in the textile industry generally. Wage cuts have not been confined to Passaic. This fight is, therefore, a fight against the existing state of affairs in the textile industry as a whole. It is a fight that concerns every worker in the industry. Already the strike is spreading. More and more workers are daily being drawn into it. The strike first started in the Botany mills, then it spread to other mills in Passaic and

vicinity. Now it is spreading to the silk dyeing plants of Paterson and vicinity, that employ approximately 10,000 workers.

To Extend Strike.

There is every likelihood that if the strike is prolonged that workers from Lawrence, Providence, Philadelphia and other textile centers will be drawn in because the workers in these centers already realize that the struggle of the Passaic strikers is their fight.

The Passaic textile workers are winning the support and sympathy of all the textile workers. The strike is creating that kinship and solidarity among textile workers that will make possible their permanent organization into a mighty textile union.

The strike of the Passaic textile workers is not only a strike against the mediaeval despotism maintained by the mills, but also the beginning of a move to organize all the unorganized workers in the textile industry. The strike is being conducted by the united front committee of textile workers. This organization maintains that the textile workers must be organized into one big, powerful textile

union in order to combat the rich, powerful textile combinations that dominate the industry.

The united front committee of textile workers is the one organization in the textile industry that is desirous and works for the unification of all the existing textile unions into one union. The united front committee is demonstrating in the Passaic strike that not only are the unorganized textile workers prepared to battle against the wage cuts, but that they are ready for organization.

There have been other revolts on the part of the unorganized textile workers, but none of the revolts bear the significance of the Passaic strike. The Passaic strike marks a turning point in the history of textile labor. The post-war period and the restriction on immigration have created favorable conditions for the unionization of the textile industry.

The present revolt in Passaic will not terminate like the Lawrence strike and similar occurrences. The Passaic strike will lead definitely to organization. The united front committee holds out a hand of fellowship to every existing union in the textile

industry. It invites them to join with it in taking advantage of the favorable opportunities that now exist for organizing the industry. The call of the united front committee for united action is the call of the heroic Passaic strikers. Every organized textile worker, every existing textile union should take its stand on this question. Either unity and organization of the workers, or dissension and the continued state of disorganization.

United Organization Drive.

The united front committee and the Passaic strikers call for a united front of all existing textile unions against wage cuts, for the organization of the unorganized, and for the amalgamation of all existing unions into one big union for the entire textile industry. The victory of the Passaic strikers is not only a victory for better working conditions, but is also a victory for the progress of the united front committee. It will be the biggest victory, therefore, for each and every one of the million textile workers in the United States. The Passaic strike, therefore, calls for the fullest support from each and every textile worker in America.