52nd Congress Urged To Prohibit Commerce In 'Sweated' Garments

WASHINGTON, Jan. 20, 1893—The Committee on Manufactures, late on the 52d Congress to enact legislation with the business of the citizen, and least exercise of Federal jurisdiction will effectively prevent such commerce as is the result of personal wear made under unhealthy conditions.

Cloakmakers' Rally to Protest
Styling of Hazelton, Pa., Minors

NEW YORK, Sept. 17, 1897—Cloakmakers are expected to overflow the great hall at Cooper Union tonight to protest the brutal killing of strikingvelers in Hazelton, Pa., by hired henchmen of the mine owners, and to express their solidarity with the strikers. Doors will be opened early to accommodate the crowds coming directly from the shops.

Seven Cloak Unions At Convention—Aim To Unite Nation's Garment Workers—Dues Stamps and Labels Issued—Vote To Join AFL—Minutes of Historic Meeting

NEW YORK, June 3, 1900—The first national convention of Cloakmakers, called by the United Brotherhood of Cloakmakers, No. 1 of New York and Vicinity, was held on Sunday, June 3, 1900, at Labor Lyceum, 64 East 43rd Street, New York City. At 10 A.M. the meeting was called to order.

After considerable deliberation a resolution to form an International Union was unanimously carried. It was moved and seconded, the name of this organization shall be "International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union." The following temporary officers were elected: B. Bruff, of New York, Chairman, and M. Silverman, of Baltimore, Secretary. The temporary chairman in his opening address declared that the Cloakmakers of New York had come to the conclusion that, in order to improve the condition of the working people in the trade, it is imperative that besides having local organizations in their respective cities the Cloakmakers should be united the whole country over. To this end the convention has been called by the New Yorkers.

After the chairman had concluded his remarks, credentials were presented and the following delegates were seated:
- Cloakmakers' Protective Union of Philadelphia—Goldberg and Schuster
- United Clothworkers of Philadelphia—Schwartz and Schweiger
- Cloakmakers' Union of Baltimore—Silverman
- United Brotherhood of Cloakmakers No. 1 of New York and Vicinity—Bruff, Grosman and Lohner.

Walkout Called by Philadelphia Union

PHILADELPHIA, March 24, 1899—The Executive Committee of the Garment Workers' Union tonight ordered a strike of the 6,000 garment makers of this city, beginning tomorrow at noon. The purpose of the strike is to secure the abolition of sub-contracting, as well as to secure higher wages and increased rates.

A Striking Committee was appointed to advise the place of the strike and to station pickets near the shops to induce any non-union or new workers from going to work. It is expected that the strikers will effect nearly every establishment in the city. The strikers claim that a more opportune time for a strike could not be chosen, as there is a rush of work in all directions and the contractors will have difficulty getting hands.

3,500 in Boston Strike Against 50% Wage Cut

BOSTON, Sept. 20, 1894—Thirty-five hundred contractors struck today for higher wages, the abolition of the piece system and a nine-hour day. But few of the contractors had absolutely refused the demands, but the men thought they only wanted to delay the strikers for a harder fight, and so decided to bring the strike on at once.

Wages have been cut on an average of 50 per cent during the past year, and the result of the recent strike in New York caused these contractors to attempt the enforcement of their demands.

—NEW YORK TIMES

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—NEW YORK TIMES

Attention, Cloakmakers! NEW YORK, Jan. 25, 1890—Working hours for inside shops in the Philadelphia Union will be from 5 A.M. to 5 P.M. only. Hours for outside shops will be from 7 A.M. to 7 P.M. All cloakmakers are expected to observe strictly this new union rule.
UNION'S BIRTH CERTIFICATE

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

SECRETARY OF THE CONVENTION, BROOKER GOLDBERG, OF PHILADELPHIA, WAS ELECTED CHAIRMAN AND BROOKER BRADFORD, OF NEW YORK, SECRETARY.

Brooker Barondess greeted the convention. In his speech he demonstrated the importance of an international union and declared that at the first convention a corner-stone would be laid for the sacred edifice of unity in the cloakmaking trade, and he expressed hope that this enterprise would bear good fruit in the future.

Next to him Mr. Robinson, organizer of the AFL, addressed the convention and gave valuable advice as to the way of forming an international union.

The first point was next taken up. The delegates of the Philadelphia Protective Union reported that they were in favor of an international union. United Brotherhood of Cloakmakers of New York reported that they numbered from three to four thousand members in good standing, and that they were in favor of an international union.

Cloak Pressers of Philadelphia, that they are well organized, have no instructions. Baltimore Cloak Makers Union, instructed in favor of forming an International Union. Skirt Makers of New York and Newark Cloak Makers Union, instructed in favor of an International Union.

At 12:30 recess was taken. At 2 P.M. the convention reconvened. A credence was presented from Brownsville Cloakmakers for delegate Ginsburg, who was duly admitted.

Police Club Paraders Before Permit Comes

NEW YORK, Oct. 12, 1894—The parade of the striking cloakmakers began with something like a riot last night. In the disturbance the police at the Madison Station Station used their clubs freely and with vigor. More than one striker was removed to neighboring drug stores, while others were wounded from clubs and fists.

March Was Announced

It had been announced that several thousand strikers, men and women, would form in Rutgers Place last evening and march to Union Square, where a mass meeting was to be held. It was about 3 o'clock when the cloakmakers began to assemble.

At that time a Roundman and six patrolmen of the Madison Street Station were on hand, and they ordered the gathering to disperse. The strikers refused to do so. A Roundman ordered his men to separate, and clear the square. Then a scene of confusion followed. The strikers were clubbed. Two of them would have been killed, and two others were wounded in the head.

Cops Fire Revolvers

Leader Joseph Barondess, who was in the committee room at 412 Grand Street, was summoned, and reached Rutgers Street, where the strikers again endeavored to form a line, just as Capt. Green and a squad of police from the Madison Street Station arrived on the scene. Police again drew their clubs when the strikers refused to disperse, and a conflict with the crowd took place. Policeman No. 136 fired his revolver into the air, and several other policemen followed his example.

By Bernard Braun
First Secretary-Treasurer (ILGWU)

NEW YORK, Special—In the spring the United Brotherhood of Cloakmakers of New York sent a call for a convention of organ- izations throughout the country, representing these trades at a convention.

Lack of unity among the ladies' garment workers in the various cities made it possible for the manufacturers to view without fear any effort on the part of their employees to increase wages, to throw off some of those odious conditions of employment or to gain some recognition of their rights.

In answer to the call of the New York Cloakmakers' Union, there met in that city 11 delegates. In a one-day session an executive board was elected, a label was adopted, but not a constitution.

Moved, seconded, and carried, and each local shall be paid $10.00 for a term of one year, with a future due stamps shall be paid by the Executive Board of the International for all amounts, and it shall be paid for the stamps at the rate of one cent a piece. These stamps shall be sold by the locals to their members at weekly dues.

Moved, seconded and carried to issue a label. The Executive Board instructed to attend to it.

Moved, seconded, and carried, that all unions in the ladies' garment trade shall be eligible to admission.

Revised it is unanimously voted to join the American Federation of Labor. The question is referred to an organizing committee.

Moved, seconded, and carried, to issue a permit, to all the labor organizations and request them to publish all reports and proceedings of the International.

Officers Elected

Nomination for election of officers for the International Brotherhood of Cloakmakers, the 25th Annual Meeting of the International Brotherhood of Cloakmakers and Trouers, November 9, 1909, at 9 P.M., at the Hotel Astoria, 122 West 36th Street, New York.

Mr. H. Grossman, New York, president; H. Frank, New York, secretary and treasurer. Brother Barondess volun- teered to serve his term without salary, and to furnish the necessary books. A vote of thanks was tendered the convention.

Executive Board: Silverman of Baltimore; Shat, Schwager and Schwartz of Philadelphia and Lib- rave of New Orleans. Resolved, that the President be authorized to acquire security of the Secretary whenever in his judgment it may become necessary.

Moved, seconded, and carried, to request the United Brotherhood of Cloakmakers of New York to per- mit the Secretary-Treasurer, Braun, to leave his office in the interests of the International. Silverman and London were appointed a committee with power to draw a set of resolutions.

Motion carried, to submit the action of the convention to a referen- dum vote of the locals composing the International. It was also requested to request them to send in their reports of their vote upon the subject decided by this convention.

Closing exercises then followed. All delegates expressed great satisfac- tion with the formation of the International Union and pledged their loyalty to the advance- ment of the new body.

The United Brotherhood of Cloakmakers of New York boundless confidence, and that it is an entertainment. Amid universal en- thusiasm the convention adjourned.

—MINUTES OF JUNE 2, 1909 MEETING
SWEATSHOP

"The capitalist who gives out work to be done at home has an interest in retaining a great many persons on his books; he is tempted to give each of them a little employment occasionally and play them off one against another; and this he can easily do because they do not know one another, and cannot arrange concerted action." — ALFRED MARSHALL

"... earnings barely sufficient to sustain existence; hours of labor such as to make the lives of the workers periods of almost ceaseless toil, hard and unlovely to the last degree; sanitary conditions injurious to the health of the persons employed and dangerous to the public."

— HOUSE OF LORDS COMMITTEE ON SWEATING

"Some of the sweating trades... are said to be maintained by the economy which can be effected by employers who use no expensive plant or machinery, and who are able readily to increase or diminish the number of their employees so as to keep pace with the demands of some season's trade..."

— JOHN A. HOBBON

"The contractor or sweatshop boss was a mere labor broker deriving his income from the margin between the piece rate he received from the merchant-capitalist and the rate he paid in wages. As any workman could easily become a contractor... the competition between contractors was of necessity of the cut-throat kind." — SELIG PERLMAN

"Human beings confined in small, unventilated rooms inevitably lose vigor; the process of oxidation of the blood being checked, the process of making blood... is checked. With foul air, therefore, a smaller amount of muscular force is generated from the same amount of food... Moreover, in close rooms, unventilated and uncleaned, the germs of certain diseases... are preserved and readily communicated, to the impairment of health and the destruction of life." — FRANCIS A. WALKER

—Pictures from LESLIE'S WEEKLY
First-Hand Picture Of Sweatshop Life

By Jacob A. Riis

Crusading journalist and reformer, battled against the evils of slum living in New York's East Side.

NEW YORK, 189. — Take the Second Avenue Elevated Railroad at Chatham Square and ride up half a mile through the slums of the city's dirtiest district. Every open window of the big tenements, that stand like a continuous brick wall on both sides of the way, gives you a glimpse of one of these shops as the trains speed by.

Men and women bending over their machines, or ironing clothes at the window, half-naked. Properties do not count on the East Side; nothing counts that cannot be converted into cash. The road is like a big gangway through an endless workroom where vast multitudes are forever laboring... Mer stagner along the sideward growing under heavy burdens of unworn garments, or enormous black heaps stuffed full of finished coats and trousers.

Up two flights of dark stairs, three, four, with new smell of cabbage, of onions, of frying fish, on every landing, whirring sewing machines behind closed doors, tramping what goes on within, to the door that opens to admit the bundle and the man. A sweater, this, in a small way. Five men and a woman, two young girls, not fifteen, and a boy who says sneaked that he is fifteen, and lies in saying it as he is at the machines sewing.

The boy says the woman alone look up at our entrance. The girls sit sidelong glances, but at a warning look from the man with the bundle they tred their mit's shoulders and sit quietly.

Learners Get 82 to 85

They are "leaners," all of them, says the woman, who proves to be the "boss," and have "come over" only a few weeks ago. She says they are able to talk at first, but a few words in her own tongue from our guide set her fears, whatever they are, at rest, and she grows almost talkative.

There are ten machines in the room; six are hired at two dollars a month. For the two smokers' begrimed rooms, one somewhat larger than ordinary, they pay $25 a month. She does not complain, though "times are not what they were, and it costs a good deal to live." Eight dollars a week for the family of six and two boarders. How do they manage, she says, as she goes over the hill-of-fares, at the fifty cent a day, of milk two quarts a day at six cents a quart, one pound of meat for dinner at 12 cents, butter a pound a week at eight cents a pound, of quarter of a pound. Coffee, potatoes, and pickles complete the list.

Coal at ten cents a small packet; milk at four and five cents a quart, according to quality. The sanitary authorities know what that means, and how miserably inadequate to the line of fifty or a hundred dollars for the murder done in cold blood by the vertebrae which point the bones of these tenements with the stuff that is half water, or even.

Cloak Wagons Down

Putting the cloths into Hester Street, we stumble upon a nest of cloakmakers in forty days, eight months of the year, the cloakmaker is idle, or nearly so. Now in his hand, he has his cloak, all complete, is the pride of his shop. The cloaks are of cheap plush, and might sell for eight or nine dollars over the store-counter.

Seven dollars in the weekly wages of this small man and two children and one dollar and a half rent to pay per month. A boarder pays about a third of it. He earns a week when he made ten dollars a week and thought himself rich. But wages have come down fearfully in the last two years. Think of it: "come down to this."

The other cloakmakers are not sure that they can make as much as $12 a week, when they are employed, to takings their work home and sewing till midnight. One exhibits his account books with a lopsided street that

The position of the contractor or sweater now in the business in America is peculiarly that of an organizer and employer of immigrants. The man who is reputed to be his contractor is the man who will take work for him, and is able to speak the languages of several classes of immigrants, and easily persuade his neighbor or his wife and children to work for him, and in this way can obtain the cheapest help.

Houseswves Called

During the busy season, when the work doubles, the number of people employed increases in the same proportion. All the contractors are agents of some one employed nearby.

The contractor is called, as the houseswives, who formerly worked at the trade and abandoned it after marriage, are called into service for an increased price of a dollar "caught at University of Wisconscin."

The facility of directing the energies of reform solely against the "sweatshops" in New York is in one branch of the clothing trade, the making of ladies' ready-made garments, including cloaks and so-called "tailor-made suits"

Already in this line of manufacturing fully 75 per cent of the product has passed out of the hands of contractors into those of "manufacturers." Ten years ago probably 60 per cent of women's clothing was made by people who worked for contractors, although now only about 25 per cent of the trade are working for contractors.

Manufacturers' Increase

But so far as the people employed in the business are concerned there has been no material change for the better, since these small manufacturers retain all the abusiveness of long hours, small pay, and insanitary shops. The way in which this new class of manufacturers has arisen in the clothing trade and has driven out of business the large manufacturer on floundering his management is one of the remarkable developments of this remarkable trade.

These "former" large manufacturers whose ready-made business have gone into the retail or custom trade and have set up model "inside" factories on Broadway, where they cater to the middle and more well-to-do purchasers. Small manufacturers on Broadway and other streets have absorbed the former wholesale trade.

The saving by this small men against the large cloak manufacturer is in the following way: he does not have to pay a high-priced designer, since he designs his own pattern; he does not have to pay a superintendent, since he manages his own business; nor does he pay high rents, since he is usually located in the poor quarter of the city. He can get labor as cheap as any contractor because he runs his shop in the same manner as he would run a manufacturing establishment. When he buys his cloth he orders it in the shop open day and night, and can take it m the way he wishes.
Cellar Deathtraps Shock State Sup't

NEW YORK, Nov. 21, 1900.—The truly sordid and sad state of affairs in the women's garment shops of New York City is finally being brought to the attention of state officials. The Albany committee of the State License Superintendent Daniel O'Leary this past week presented a report on the deathtraps in the garment industry. O'Leary is investigating charges of factory law violations leveled by the Cloakmakers' Union and other labor organizations. He was accompanied on his tour by Herman Grossman and A. Rothman of the union.

Store clerks, draymen, and other workers in the garment industry are subjected to working hours that are too long and conditions that are too hazardous. The workers are paid low wages and are required to work in unsafe and unhealthy conditions. TheCloakmakers' Union has been fighting for better working conditions for years, but progress has been slow and the fight is far from over.
Hundred Sacrifice
Rings, Brooches to Keep Strike Going

By Abraham Rosenberg
ILGWU President from 1908 to 1914.

NEW YORK, Aug. 1, 1896—Avidil
unforgettable events in which rings,
watches, earrings, brooches and other personal jewelry and memen-
tos were piled high on the chair-
man's table in a matter of minutes,
the clockmakers of this city voted
to continue their nine-week strike
which began as a lockout.

The action was taken at a mass
meeting of all strikers in the big-
gest hall in New York City, the
New Everett Hall on Evest St.

Earlier in the strike, when the
workers realized that public opinion
was with them, they fought with
their lives. Not even arrest could
frighten them. When one of the
strike committeemen was shot down
in front of a crab shop at the cor-
ger of Eldridge and Burginton
Streets, the effect was just the op-
posite to what was intended. The
workers pledged to continue the
fight until victory.

After several days of negotiating,
a settlement was reached and signa-
tures were obtained for the
contract, and the contractors' asso-
ciation.

At the mass meeting Abraham
Cahan and Barons demanded the
meaning of the settlement clear.
The vote was more than 2000 to 24

The strike was inevitable. After the uproar sub-
cluded the chairman warned there
was a late Friday night strike.

One of the workers immedi-
ately came up to the chairman and
removing a ring from his finger
placed it on the table. In the next
few minutes hundreds followed his
example.

"THE NEW YORKER"
NEW YORK, Aug. 13, 1896—The children's jackenetworks' strike was due to the initiative of John Lewis, organizing the boys and girls of the trade. The union he founded is still strong, the young workers in it are better organized. Asked about the age of the biggest girl in his organization, Harry said with a smile which looked a bit too wide:

"We have very big girls, but they are 18 years old. The average machine tender, or "holler pulser," gets from $2.50 to $3.50 a week. So the seventh-grade boys who work was for an advance of the scale of wages.

"What we wanted was $1 per week for the young boys and girls, our operators are worth it. On our jacks, our operators must turn the graver and the flap, the collars, and sometimes two or four operators sometimes in one press that is too much for us. We get mixed up and nearly every day we are forced to send them all. But the boss, he don't care; he pays us the same. That won't go. We want $1 for each machine and $2.50 per week. There's no use, ain't it, Mr. Lewis?"

Outlines Today's Address

The new meeting of the Machine Tender's Union will take place this afternoon in the third quarter of the third strike. The following words, to be spoken by the principal speaker, John Lewis, when asked to give an outline of today's address, he said modestly:

"I was not needed by anyone, and the children are too worried about their bread and better to have a mind for speeches."
New Star in Our Firmament

June 3, 1900 will remain for many generations to come a red-letter day in the lives of tens of thousands of cloackmakers—in New York, in Philadelphia, in Chicago, in Boston and other big cities in our country.

For on this day there's come to life, after many sterile attempts, an international union of women's apparel workers. True, there was only a handful of delegates in attendance at the opening session of the tiny convention of cloackmakers and skirtmakers which gave birth to this brand new ILGWU. It is also undeniably true that these eleven cloackmakers' delegates represented only about 2,000 union men and women as compared with the 136,000 workers estimated to be employed in the ladies' wear shops all over the country.

But these few courageous delegates represent a fighting spirit of submerged workpeople, who for more than twenty years have been trying frantically to rise through unionism from the jungle of sub-contracting and temenent house labor.

This little infant, our ILGWU, will find its cradle days tough and bitter. Born in dire poverty, it will have to pull itself up slowly, by its own bootstraps, before its voice is heard and its existence recognized. There are still a number of cloak and skirt unions in the country which must join the ILGWU to make it representative of all garment workers in this country and in Canada. There are also some waist unions which belong properly to the new international union and which should join in on a basis of full equality.

And so, we doff our caps and shout a hearty welcome to this newcomer in the world of labor, this puny International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. May its protective young arms grow apace—to embrace within our own lifetime every worker in every branch of the industry over which its jurisdiction extends.

The AFL Our Home

The warm greeting extended by Brother Herman Robinson, the regional representative of the American Federation of Labor in New York, to the small group of stout-hearted cloackmakers who met on June 3 to form an international union in the ladies' garment industry, is a fine augury for this fledgling in American organized labor.

Many of our cloakmakers will remember the appearance of Samuel Gompers, the president of the AFL, at our big meeting in Cooper Union on October 6, 1894, at which he strongly advised against a sympathy strike in the cloak industry because such an action would lead to breaking contracts with many manufacturers against whom we had no grievances at that time. If only we had heeded his sage counsel then!

We hope that we have matured a good deal as trade unionists since 1894. And we are looking forward eagerly toward favorable action by the AFL on our application for a charter as an autonomous international union and toward taking our place in the fighting ranks of the general labor movement of our country.

"On the Sidewalks of New York"

This Time for Keeps

Almost every year the cloakmakers have been agitation almost every year the union went to piece. One reason for this was that the business was left in the hands of a few.

The contract system. This system is constantly making the cloakmakers' condition worse. Because of this system the workers are not paid for their organization. They cannot struggle for better working conditions, nor not shorten the work day. Under this system the men work like oxen and are paid as if they go around idle.

Now the new cloackmakers are organizing on a new basis. Experience has taught them to keep their own kind together. They are not workmen common to the contractors.

By Joseph Barondess

Worke devotedly to organize a permanent cloackmakers union in the last quarter of the 19th Century.

The first attempt to organize the cloackmakers on a real trade union basis was made in the year 1880. In less than a week's time, under the leadership of Mr. H. Barondess, a convention was held at the head of the organization, which assumed the name "The Operators and Cloackmakers Union of New York and Vicinity."

From the day of the existence of the Operators and Cloackmakers Union was a militant organization, and we achieved one victory after the other and our power for good grew in immense proportion.

The manufacturers, frightened at our power, organized a manufacturer's association in the month of October, 1880, all of them looking at each other in fear when they numbered about 10,000. This lockout lasted for nearly six months, during which time we succeeded in compelling the manufacturers to pay the Cloack and Suit Cutters something over $40,000 for loss of time.

Since that time we have, one after another, on the other hand, been given opportunities in the trade movement, and we have developed that time in the labor movement as well as in any other branch of activity and reform, things must develop by the process of evolution, and I have this to say to each of you: you can only have a lasting influence there where all the laborers have been achieved gradually.

Our employers saw fit to invite the aid of the courts and the police force in order to break up our union. Most of the prominent men of the operators and manufacturers, including myself, were arrested on all sorts of charges, thereby compelling us to spend all our means and energies to defend ourselves instead of assuming the aggressive position against the unscrupulous employers as a labor organization.

It was then that we became convinced that a successful individual organization might lose, but that a national union which would aid it in its struggles, and also influence the public opinion, was the answer to the atrocities of mean and selfish employers.

Today the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union has an ideal in the far distant future, but a national convention of the ILGWU.

"Task for the Day"

1st Chicago Union Had its Struggles

By Peter Sissman

Was an active Chicago cloak unionist and became law partner of Clarence Darrow.

CHICAGO, 1940—About seven or eight names were included as the organizers of a union which consisted of not more than a dozen members. One clear idea of the initiators was that this was to be a union of workingmen who would be accepted as members.

A call was issued during the spring of 1890 and a mass meeting was held in a room which ordinarily would hold comfortably about 50 or 60 people. That was the small room of the Educational Society which was on the second floor of an old building on Causal St. near Division St.

Cloackmakers Jam Hall

The attendance of the meeting carried the organization almost at its feet. The meeting was attended by about 200 cloackmakers. Almost all of those who attended formed the union by paying 25 cents to apply for an initial fee of $1, and of course their names and addresses were taken by the secretary.

At the next meeting, it was felt by the initiators that in justice to the new members, a new election should be held so as to give them an opportunity to elect their own officers. The new set of officers consisted of the main of the old, with the exception of the president and vice-president, who were elected from among the new members, not against the will, but really with the design of the old officers.

Plush Workers Strike

When the union with these new acquisitions was not quite two weeks old, the plush workers of 2. Bengee & B屈, one of the leading manufacturers of that day, went out on strike. That involved only about 10 workers.

The usual psychology of the worker on strike, particularly if he now discipline or self-control is developed, is the desire to see everybody else on strike when he is striking.

That pressure of course put an end to the strike of 50 plush workers into a strike of the entire factory, involving several hundred people, the greatest proportion of whom were not even members of the union.

A strike committee was appointed, and the first thing it did was to call on the firm to present the demands of the men. Mr. Bengee received the committee in person and asked what the occasion of the visit was. He was informed that the committee represented his men. He wanted to know whether they were working for his firm. It so happened that none of them did. He then sought to state that he would not see any business people had to come and talk to him about his business. He was rather polite about it and wound up by saying that they had better present their grievances in writing.

Ask Union Recognition

When it came to formalize the demands in writing, the first demand was "recognition of the union." Recognition of the union meant no more than the consent of the employer to talk to a committee representing the workers.

When the strike was won, that was really all that was won—the right to delegate a committee to present grievances to the employer or his representatives, but that was really the beginning of a union.