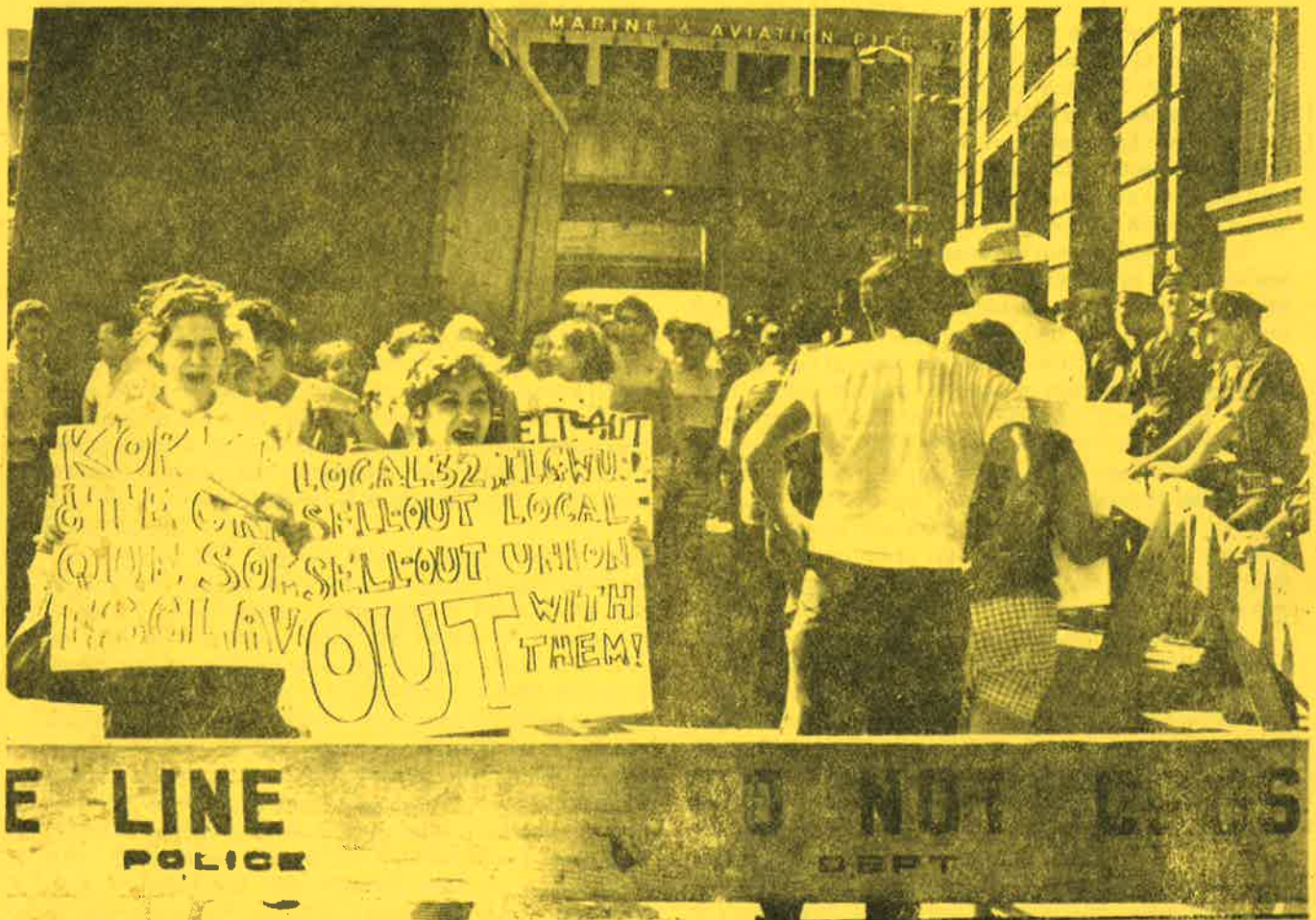


# The ILGWU: A Union That Fights For Lower Wages



by Michael Myerson

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A Union That Fights

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**W**HEN DAVID DUBINSKY, ENTRENCHED ruler of the 450,000-member International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, retired in 1966 from his 34-year presidency, *Time* magazine eulogized the "old populist potentate who had done so much to lead the poor and exploited into the different society."

Dubinsky's ILGWU has long been renowned as a model of progressive unionism—scourge of the sweatshops, voice of the disenfranchised, pioneer in health and vacation benefits, housing and social services for its members, founder and until recently the mainstay of New York's Liberal Party. The ILG is pointed to as showing a "third way" to American Labor: it avoids the vulnerability of non-unionized labor, but at the same time it has led all others in combating those "dangerous excesses" of unionism characterized as the "bitterness and class hatred" sowed by Communist union leaders in the 1930's. The ILG is proud of having shown the way for labor to better its lot by working with the employers, rather than against them. It is acclaimed as a model because it has racked up its achievements not with ruinous class strife, but through the mellow socialist idealism of its leaders successfully harnessed to American reality. But the model is a shuck. The ILG's "third way" has proved as illusory and insubstantial as the halo over David Dubinsky's head.

As early as 1910, the late Supreme Court Justice Louis D. Brandeis, dealing with a long, bitterly fought strike of immigrant cloak workers, introduced a formula for harmonious labor relations called the Protocols of Peace, in essence a peace without strike. By the time David Dubinsky won the struggle for the ILG presidency in 1932, he was a devotee of Brandeis' beatific conception of labor-management harmony. In the next four years Dubinsky firmly consolidated his position in the union, purging the Communists and other incorrigibles who insisted that his vision of industrial serenity was mere "class collaborationism." Meanwhile his doctrine was solidly institutionalized through a device—worked out with Maurice Saltzman, president of Bobbie Brooks Inc., the ILG's largest employer—called the joint Labor Relations Committee and designed to take the "crisis" element out of negotiations. And in fact there has been only one brief strike in the union's New York stronghold in the entire 37-year period since Dubinsky took office. The cost of this Pax Dubinsky has been steep, and it is the men and

women of his union who have had to pay the price. In 1947, dressmaking paid an average of 42 cents an hour *more* than steelworking; in 1967, it paid 95 cents an hour *less*. It paid 33 cents an hour more than auto-working in 1947. Twenty years later it paid \$1.17 less.

Five years ago, the ILG and the employers' association hired a research team headed by economist Leon Keyserling, former chairman of the Council of Economic Advisors under Truman, to do a \$100,000 study of the ladies' garment industry in New York. The results were so damaging that they have yet to be released. It was two years before Dubinsky even got around to telling the membership that such a study had been made. To release it would not be practical, he said, "in view of the special and unique nature of the garment industry."

The Keyserling study (which was limited to New York and focused on the 80,000 dressmakers as representatives of the city's 300,000 ILG members) argued that conditions in the industry may be the worst of any unionized field. One of the most startling findings was that, in real terms (i.e., in buying power after adjustment for inflation), weekly and annual earnings had actually *declined* over the preceding decade. This despite an increase in real productivity—the average amount of goods produced per worker—of at least 15 per cent in the same period. The study also revealed the extent to which workers were forced by chronic layoffs to resort to unemployment insurance. At the time of the study, only 3.5 per cent of New York's workers were in the garment industry; yet they drew 24 per cent of all the unemployment benefits paid.

In a sense the low wage pattern of the Keyserling report should be seen not as a defeat for Dubinsky, but as a victory: *suppression of wage levels has in fact been an active policy of his union*. It is a policy that follows from and is bound up with the whole orientation which Dubinsky's leadership has so effectively established. In simplest terms it is this: "Don't ask too much of business, or it will go away and leave us with nothing."

Where will the businesses go? To locations where the labor is cheaper and the union less effective or, more likely, nonexistent. And that is exactly what has been happening, because hard as it may be to believe, the New York wages reported by Keyserling are not the worst going. In the year of his study the wage level was lower in Los Angeles (by 23 per cent), Chicago (27 per cent), St. Louis and Fall River, Massachusetts

(34 per cent), and Cleveland and Dallas (40 per cent); even in northern New Jersey, just across the state line, the level was a fifth below New York's. It is not surprising then that the phenomenon of runaway shops has become increasingly prevalent in New York; in an eight-year period the number of shops in New York dropped by more than 23 per cent, while they doubled in Massachusetts and increased by 410 per cent in Pennsylvania. At the time of the Keyserling report, the average annual wage in Pennsylvania dress shops was \$2067.

Faced with these conditions, what *can* a union do? One indication of what can be done is the experience of the independent union, District 65 (formerly affiliated with the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union and the AFL-CIO). District 65 is an old "catchall" union, but a quarter of its 40,000 members work on the edges of the garment industry in jobs closely comparable to those controlled by the ILG. District 65 has "runaway shop" clauses in its contracts, providing for such high severance pay for employees in case of a move that many employers find it cheaper to remain. (When one employer with four New Jersey plants opened a fifth in Arizona, District 65 was prepared to send pickets to Arizona to make sure that its wage scales were protected throughout the company's operations; they got a contract.)

A "65" vice president told me that in his union the minimum beginning weekly wage is \$97.50 "for a kid off the street, an unskilled order picker." 65ers in the garment district average \$1100 more annually than ILG members, and some in comparable jobs earn as much as \$400 more per month. But the comparison doesn't end there. A District 65 member averaging \$6000 a year is eligible for a pension on a sliding scale ranging from \$55 a month after ten years up to \$190 after 30 years. In Cutters' Local 10 of the ILGWU, on the other hand (current-president Stulberg's own local, and one of the highest paid in the garment industry), it takes 15 years to qualify for a pension, and then it's \$75 a month, period.

More than three decades ago, the ILG practically invented vacation pay. But today, 30 years later, the maximum pay is the same old \$75, inflation notwithstanding. In some locals, the worker gets the money but no time off; in a few exceptional cases he gets as much as two weeks off. All of District 65's contracts have three- or four-week fully paid vacations for experienced workers.

District 65 has demonstrated impressively that a more aggressive union approach can bring considerable benefits, even in the face of the conditions that lead to runaway shops. But militancy in the organized strongholds is ultimately insufficient. The call of cheap labor over the horizon remains an irresistible siren-song in the ears of business. Unlike District 65, however, the ILG has the resources to attack the problem at its source by going out to organize those unorganized workers—following after the runaway shops and canceling out the profitability of their flight. Its leadership has simply chosen not to rock the boat.

The ILG leadership views "organizing the unorganized" rather like the Ice Age or goldfish swallowing or revolution in America—all memorable phenomena, but happily things of the past. Currently the union does not, in the usual sense, organize at all; it *re-organizes* as workers come and go within its established sphere. The union's own auditing department records a growth in membership between 1956 and 1968

of only 6000, or about two per cent in 12 years. But even more revealing is what happened when, about ten years ago, the ILG quite inadvertently organized a plant in the South.

In 1960 Levi Strauss & Co. opened a new plant in Blue Ridge, Georgia, a few miles south of the Tennessee border. The new plant got 3800 job applications, from which it selected 450 production workers, most of them women. Working conditions were bad to begin with and almost immediately became miserable. Many of the women were married to men who worked in nearby Copperhill, Tennessee, and who belonged to the Chemical Workers' Union. Drawing on their husbands' experience, they organized a local of the ILGWU, and in a short time ILG headquarters had helped negotiate a contract—the first union contract in the history of Fannin County, Georgia.

It was quite a contract. Virtually every clause in the provisions regarding disputes turned on the phrase, "in the opinion of management." On August 10, 1966, following a number of arbitrary moves by the company, 460 workers walked out (the total by then was 570). The bitter, two-year strike achieved a certain national prominence as the Jefferson Airplane rock group "scabbed" with psychedelic radio plugs for White Levi's. Meanwhile scab workers manned the plant, the home of the local's chairwoman was burned down, and a shotgun was fired into the bedroom of another union official.

The international provided no assistance, concentrating instead on convincing the strikers to return to work. Eventually hunger and the New York leadership proved persuasive; today it's business as usual for Levi's in Blue Ridge. And of course in New York the ILG strategy remained the same. As Herbert Hill, labor secretary of the NAACP, puts it: "The union attempts to keep the garment industry in New York City by maintaining low wages and minimal standards for the majority of the workers."

**I**T WOULD BE A MISTAKE TO LOOK ON the ILG's lack of militancy simply as a case of bureaucratic rheumatism, or to suppose that its leadership is merely dazed and enervated by insoluble dilemmas. After all, one logical extension of their policy of meeting the challenge of cheap unorganized labor by, as it were, underbidding it, would be to disband the union altogether, in the interests of its members, thus rendering them competitively unorganized in the labor market. That would be the logical conclusion of what seems to be a dumbfounded passivity. But the fact is that the ILG's policy is not passive at all; it is a policy of conviction—tough, activist and determined.

The political sources of that conviction are clear in David Dubinsky himself; one of the three or four most influential personages in the history of American labor, he is surely the American "social democrat" *par excellence*. And over the years, with him as its exponent, that social democratic syndrome has firmly taken hold of the ILG. The total preoccupation with extirpating Communists in the union, the labor movement, the country and the world; the identification with the employers which defines the interests of the union as essentially coinciding with theirs; and the tight leadership control alienated from the union rank and file—these mark the pattern of the ILG's history under Dubinsky.

The ILG's activist commitment to its policies frequently



risers to a proselytizing zeal, even in the case of its peculiar low wages campaign. The union has been moved to press its gospel of prospering through poverty on other workers throughout New York. Too timid to organize for higher wages in Georgia, the ILG organizes quite boldly for lower wages in New York. In 1959, discussion of a \$1.50 minimum wage came up in the AFL-CIO Central Labor Council in New York City. ILGWU representative Charles Zimmerman not only opposed it, but threatened to withdraw his union from the Council if it were approved (the Council later endorsed the \$1.50 minimum, but Zimmerman was absent at the time).

No such minimum was instituted in 1959, of course, and in April 1962, Mayor Robert Wagner appointed a Citizens' Commission on the City Economy, including two ILGWU representatives, to study the issue. The ILG men fought the \$1.50 minimum so hard that the Teamsters Union wrote a letter to the members of the Democratic majority on the City Council, saying: "Surely you must or should know that the ILGWU has a vested interest in the perpetuation of exploitation, low-wage pockets, and poverty in New York City."

The bill then before the Council called for a \$1.50 minimum, but the Mayor's Commission was already beginning to talk about a \$1.25 minimum instead. After a time, the mayor let it be known that he was interested in a bill establishing "a \$1.25 minimum wage for all employment in New York City, authorizing necessary exemption." Garment workers, of course, were a "necessary exemption." The \$1.50 minimum eventually came to pass—in the state legislature, with help from the Central Labor Council and from leaders of District 65, but without a murmur from the ILGWU.

On a similar occasion in 1966, when ILG leaders were serving as Mayor John Lindsay's chief advisors against a subway strike that was supported by every other union in the area, columnist Murray Kempton had these thoughts about president Dubinsky: "Lindsay has every excuse for thinking that Dubinsky is a labor leader; the New York Times always describes him as such; and only the longest, most painful and tedious experience has taught me that Dubinsky is distinguishable from the average garment manufacturer only by the condition that his manners are coarser and that he is in a line of work where the vicissitudes of the market do not endanger his standard of living."

**T**HE NOTION NOT ONLY OF DUBINSKY the labor leader melting into the figure of a businessman, but also of his union taking on the form of a business, undoubtedly has some quite literal validity to it. The poverty of its members aside, the sheer munificence of the union organization itself would seem sufficient to earn it a respectable position among the nation's great industrial corporations. The size of what Time magazine called the union's Knippe (nest-egg) has reached approximately \$575 million—more than the assets of Liggett and Myers, Colgate-Palmolive, or Kaiser Steel. At the ILG's 1968 national convention, it was announced that the various accounts and funds of the ILG and its affiliates had earned \$75 million in the three years 1965-67 alone. A few years ago, in a "coals-to-Newcastle" classic, the union even found money to lend to the Rockefellers for a housing project in Puerto Rico.

Such impressive revenues bespeak prudent, frugal management, and in fact the union has been most business-like in

its thrift. One of the more lucrative of its funds is known as the severance pay fund, a name dating from the time when it was originally established to provide supplementary unemployment insurance to the members. For some time now, full benefits have been paid only after a substantial unemployed waiting period has elapsed, by which time the member is likely to have found another job. Under the circumstances, the fund keeps growing—fast enough indeed to invest \$5 million at a shot.

But the ILG appears most strikingly like a business where the union itself is a boss. In its dealings with its own employees, the ILG attempts to practice the low wage policies it preaches. Virtually all unionized salaried pharmacists in New York are members of the militant Hospital and Drug Workers Union. The pharmacists in the ILG's Manhattan health clinic, however, belong to something called the Registered Nurses Guild Local 312, which it seems is a subsidiary of Local 54 of the Theater, Amusement and Cultural Building Service Employees. The ILG's pharmacists earn from \$30 to \$40 a week less than the others. The ILG also has two trucking locals, the only non-Teamster truckers in the area, with a pay scale one-third to one-half below that of the Teamsters. All that is lacking is a name to describe this phenomenon: as yet there is no name for a company union when the company is a union.

The ILG *qua* boss came out at its chintziest in 1966 when the union, which had previously been paying the social security taxes of the people who worked for it, suddenly announced that the amount would henceforth be taken out of their pay envelopes. This represented a 4.2 per cent pay cut. Soon 650 of the ILG's employees, members of Local 153 of the Office and Professional Employees, struck against the union, and the ILG was forced to grudgingly concede a raise to offset the cut.

The historical process by which a strong left-oriented trade union reached the point of pinching the pennies of its employees is recalled by a former ILG business agent: "There was probably never in American history a group of so many class-conscious proletarians and worker intellectuals as the ILG had 35 years ago. I'm not sure how it happened, but over the years the employers and the union representatives became constant factors in an industry with a large turnover. They formed a permanent relationship to which the worker became an outsider. Today the income, life style, even ethnic factors, and definitely politics of the manufacturers and union functionaries are common features, and at odds with most union members." NAACP labor secretary Herbert Hill sums up the result. "Some unions may be corrupt," he says, "but at least they screw the bosses for the workers. The ILGWU instead screws its members in the interest of the bosses."

Hill and the ILG have had their differences. In 1962 Hill was serving as a consultant to a subcommittee of the House Committee on Education and Labor, when the subcommittee made the ILG the subject of an intense investigation. The union threatened a withdrawal of funds from the NAACP. Nobody got fired, but there was a long and vicious behind-the-scenes donnybrook.

Two years later, Dubinsky introduced to the union's national convention "the most constructive, sane, able, intelligent leader" in the civil rights movement of the day: Roy Wilkins of the NAACP. Wilkins responded by praising Dubinsky for his long fight against communism, and by sloughing off the Hill matter. But the clincher was his ringing affirmation that



**"An examination of official [ILG] policy does not reveal any—not even the slightest—deliberate policy of racial restriction, even where the effect might be construed as racial in character." With an endorsement like that, why fight discrimination?**

Of the three ILG locals which control access to the highest paid jobs, the best of all is Local 60, the pressers, with hourly wages of over five dollars. Local 60 is virtually all white. There is, however, an appended Local 60A, whose members are almost all black and Puerto Rican; they are the shipping clerks, order pickers, push boys and delivery men. It has twice the membership of Local 60—but the presser who is manager of 60 is also manager of 60A, and the appendage has never been made an independent local. Asked why, ILG officials say it is because that would create a separate black and Spanish local, which would be discrimination.

On the other hand, Local 89, which allows no blacks or Puerto Ricans, is defended on the basis that it began as an Italian immigrant local because of language difficulties, and has retained that character up until the present time. Local 10, representing the highly skilled cutters, remains almost all white due to exclusionary training practices; unskilled blacks and Puerto Ricans looking for garment center jobs wind up in unskilled jobs at poverty-level wages, and the ILG leaves them there.

Gus Tyler, assistant to the president of the ILGWU, acknowledges, "There is a shortage of skilled sewing machine operators. Nobody knows this better than the ILGWU." Yet the union has consistently opposed federal training of apparel workers through the poverty program, and a number of Neighborhood Youth Corps Job Training Centers in New York and New Jersey have been forced to close down. Says one project director, "We have asked the unions for their help in developing training programs and working out a solution to this problem, but the ILGWU won't answer."

**O**NE THING MUST BE SAID FOR THE ILG leadership: they do not believe in tokenism. The United States Senate has a black member; professional basketball has a black coach; General Motors has a black dealership; there is a black man on the Supreme Court. Of the 24 members of the General Executive Board (GEB) of the ILGWU, none is black. Under heavy pressure, the Executive Board recently added a Puerto Rican—from the island, thus providing no representation for the Puerto Rican workers of New York, who vastly outnumber the island membership. In a union whose membership is 85 per cent women, only one woman sits on the Board.

On April 19, 1968, federal judge Constance Baker Motley, in a case involving the National Maritime Union, noted that in that union "it now takes a minimum of ten years to become eligible for national office. No other union studied, except possibly the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, required so much time for its members to qualify for national office." To serve on the GEB, an ILG member needed five years' membership in good standing, "during three years of which he had held a full-time paid elective or appointive office." To run for president or secretary-treasurer, a member needed ten years in good standing, half of them as an elected or appointed functionary.

In practice these requirements meant that of the 450,000 national members of the ILGWU, just 300—one-fifteenth of

one per cent—were eligible for the Board; fewer than 200 were eligible for the two top jobs. As Herbert Hill points out: "Under these conditions no more than four or five non-white persons would be eligible to run for the General Executive Board of the union, and virtually none at all for the top leadership positions."

The ILG changed its requirements at its last national convention—no doubt with an eye to Judge Motley's opinion—but not until after the leadership had been retained in power. There have, of course, already been some attempted rebellions, like the one in the last election held in Local 155, a local which encompasses some 14,000 workers, mostly women—floor girls, operators, buttonhole makers, etc.—scattered across New York City in about 265 separate shops. The largest single group, floor girls, are the most exploited, earning at most \$70 a week (when they get work), with monthly dues of \$5.50 and a maximum of one week's vacation a year.

At the last local election, a partial slate of four independent rank-and-file candidates ran against the official leadership. Under the ILGWU constitution it is illegal to organize caucuses except during a period of three months prior to each of the infrequent elections; this forces workers, if they are to organize an opposition at all, to do it in partial secrecy, risking expulsion from the union and the loss of their jobs.

Once organized and announced, the independent slate was forbidden to visit the shops in the local—although the current officials of course have access to these shops every day. The independents were refused the right to use the membership mailing list for campaigning, and were barred from using space in the local's newspaper. On the ballot itself, they were denied space as a slate and were placed on the bottom of the page, underneath the leadership. The four rank-and-file candidates—three blacks and a white of Italian extraction—were then threatened with "elimination."

Immediately after the election, the local's paper attacked the independent slate for its "racism." The offense was a campaign leaflet which carried pictures of all four candidates; since three were black, this was obviously "black racism."

Even among the cutters in Local 10—home local to both Dubinsky and his successor—there has been unrest (the cutters are considered the "aristocracy" of the ILGWU, but their minimum wages run from \$100 to \$120). In December 1967, a slate representing the Independent Cutters' Club tried to get on the ballot for the election the following February. All but four were excluded, and the four, again, were denied a "slate" position and relegated to the bottom of the ballot. The old leadership cheerfully ran on the slogan, "Repudiate the Communists," and won.

But the Independent Cutters' Club didn't quit. They complained to the U.S. Labor Department—which said that the union had in fact violated the law but that the complaint was "not suitable for litigation." That didn't seem to make sense, so the Club pushed for more information, and got a reply from Frank Kleiler, director of the Office of Labor-Management.

Kleiler said, in effect, that the union had violated the law in providing for the election of certain officers by the Executive Board, in requiring elected officers to sign undated resignations, in refusing to honor requests to distribute campaign literature and in denying group designation to the Independent Cutters' Club. Alas, the Department also felt that the case was closed, because of procedural weaknesses. In one

observer's phrase, "Complaint justified, complaint dismissed." The Club, still determined, is appealing the decision.

But the union's contempt for its members and the utter alienation that results is not something occasionally vented in an insurgent election campaign. It is lived out day to day in the union's operations and on the shop floor. Much of this is communicated in these comments of a Puerto Rican shipping clerk at Stacy Ames, a Long Island City manufacturer of women's dresses and raincoats: "I never was allowed to see my contract. I'm told it called for \$76 a week, but I only got \$67. There are three locals in my shop. I'm in 60A and we've had three meetings in the last year. About 150 members out of 15,000 show up. The meetings consist of one long report, questions and answers. One time, a brother asked why shipping clerks aren't paid more than packers. 'That's none of your business,' he was told. It's really terrible. I was working at the place for three months before I found out the guy I thought was the dock supervisor was actually my shop steward. And we have high school kids coming in to work a few hours after school. They don't belong to the union, but the union doesn't seem to care. It's almost as if the rest of us don't belong either." Federal law requires that contracts be available to members, but the union keeps a vigilant guard against rabble-rousers who do not sufficiently appreciate the benefits of industrial harmony and peace.

"HOW MARVELOUS IS THE ILGWU," observed Murray Kempton at the time the \$1.50 minimum wage law was in the state legislature and the union was lying low. "It has a position on Viet-Nam and Algeria; but it has no position on wages in its home town." The ILG can be a hawk as well as a dove. Its submissiveness on wages and its militancy on Viet-Nam both spring from the same ideological root: the idea of labor's common interest with business, not only as management, but also in the global role of imperial agent and anti-communist crusader. With this viewpoint it was natural that David Dubinsky and his union should have played such a key role in the process that has made so much of American organized labor an active partner in U.S. foreign policy in recent years.

Dubinsky was long assisted in this task by Matthew Woll, a vice president of the AFL who was assigned to help Dubinsky crush his left-led rank-and-file opposition in the 1930's. Woll was prominent in pushing "labor pan-Americanism"—the cultivation of labor leaders throughout the hemisphere who would applaud U.S. incursions, including the various dispatches of Marines. Woll was also known in the '30s as the major spokesman for the National Civic Federation, set up by AFL founder Samuel Gompers and others in the wake of the Spanish-American War as a vehicle for promoting "labor peace" on the home front while business looked toward further imperialist adventures abroad.

Dubinsky and Woll formed a core of anti-communist militancy in the AFL (and later the AFL-CIO). Woll became chairman of the AFL International Affairs Department, to which the ILG became a heavy contributor. Dubinsky also brought Jay Lovestone, a former Communist Party leader (expelled in 1929), to prominence in labor-foreign policy. Lovestone brought with him to the ILG a coterie of embittered ex-Communists who tended to share his vendetta mentality toward their political alma mater, and many of them (including

present vice presidents Louis Nelson and Charles Zimmerman) rose to high positions in the union. Lovestone himself was made ILG director of international affairs, and he still maintains an office at the union's headquarters; however he soon moved up to join Woll's base of operations in the AFL. By World War II, Lovestone was the main advisor to Dubinsky and Woll, and together they founded (in 1943) the American Labor Conference on International Affairs. ALCIA, which still publishes the *New Leader*, turned up as a CIA fund recipient in the revelations of 1967. When George Meany, another Dubinsky protégé, took over AFL international affairs, he took Lovestone on—and still retains him—as his chief policy maker on foreign affairs.

Dubinsky's own ties to the anti-communist Socialist International proved fruitful as many emigré social democrats fleeing from the war in Europe came into his circle, providing him with an impressive brain trust and operational staff of internationally sophisticated right-wing "socialists." This, together with the already enormous treasury of his union, made it possible for Dubinsky to put together an extremely effective machine, and to finance the intelligence operations of various exile groups. In the course of this, Dubinsky and Lovestone gained the ear of the State Department and of the powerful Dulles brothers. By the time the CIA was formed after the war, the two unionists were key influences. Lovestone still approves all of the Agency's "labor attachés" in American embassies around the world. Many of them predictably come from the ranks of ILG leadership—like the late Serafino Romualdi, former executive director of the American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD), another substantial CIA beneficiary.

The ILGWU General Executive Board reported to the union's 1968 convention on developments in its burgeoning international programs. It had succeeded in setting up an Inter-American Federation of Textile and Garment Workers with its own Charles Zimmerman on the executive committee of the new organization. Another ILG vice president, E. Howard Molisani, had visited Japan at the end of 1967 as part of a mission arranged by the State Department in cooperation with the AFL-CIO. Still another, David Gingold, was in Brazil on an AFL-CIO program in cooperation with the Alliance for Progress, AIFLD and the Agency for International Development. The report to the convention paid special tribute to one "who was, as usual, enormously helpful"—Jay Lovestone.

The astonishing thing is that, despite their unsavory record both in international politics and in the conditions of work in their own garment district, the ILG and David Dubinsky himself have retained the appealing public image of progressive, humanistic socialist idealists. A comment made by the ILG leader to his official biographer indicates just how unrecognizably that kind of idealism has been stretched and inverted in Dubinsky's ideological wringer. "I have come to the conclusion that Socialism, certainly the orthodox variety, will never work," said Dubinsky, elaborating in a perfect through-the-looking-glass paraphrase the thoughts of Chairman Mao: "Trade unionism needs capitalism like a fish needs water."

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*Michael Myerson is currently preparing a book on the origins of the New Left, soon to be published by Grossman.*

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