

AFTER SIX WEEKS OF STRIKE

By Sidney Hillman, International Pres. Amal. Clothing Workers.

The clothing strike in Chicago is in its sixth week now.

When it started the manufacturers said there was no strike. Then they immediately hired sluggers and armed guards to protect themselves and their property against the girls who were on strike. The police department found it necessary to double details in the strike district.

Still the manufacturers denied the existence of a strike.

Then we had two parades. The workers who marched numbered 20,000 or more. They were all strikers.

Since the strike began there have been nearly a thousand arrests made.

John R. Glenn, sec'y of the Illinois Manufacturers' ass'n, sent out a letter in which he denounced the "New York agitator who was undermining one of the greatest of Chicago's industries." He spoke in vituperative strain of the thousands of misguided workers who marched under his (the N. Y. A.) disloyal headquarters.

Still the manufacturers persisted there was no strike.

Column upon column of material in reference to the strike has been printed in the newspapers; the best social workers and clubwomen of the city became interested in our fight for collective bargaining—investigated and joined in the universal chorus of protest against the policies of the employers in refusing to deal with us.

They came, they saw and they were horrified. The conditions, wages and sanitary conditions in the clothing industry they saw to be in need of immediate and drastic reform. They joined their voices with ours.

The city recognized the true merits of the situation by appointing two council committees; the organizations of Chicago recognized the condition and expressed themselves; the

people showed their interest in many ways; society women went on the picket lines and saw; the clergy preached the gospel for which we are fighting—

But the manufacturers say there is no strike.

There is a strike.

And it is a winning strike.

Already we have won big victories. And we are going to win a final and complete victory in the end.

There is no need to draw the attention of the public upon the low wages and unbearable conditions under which the workers have existed. Everybody knows them now. They have been demonstrated and proven.

The strike of the clothing workers is a fight for labor, a fight for collective bargaining, a fight for the principle of arbitration, a fight for the principle of decency in the shops.

The manufacturers have refused to arbitrate with 20,000 workers who, they claim, were perfectly satisfied with the ideal conditions under which they were working.

Prince John of England refused to sign the Magna Charta; King George refused the right of representation to the American colonists.

The manufacturers refuse to arbitrate.

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