# GASTONIA REVISITED

## BY THEODORE DRAPER

As the 1970's open before us, we are again becoming accustomed to hear of a falling stock market, rising unemployment, and revolutionary discontents. They are still faint echoes of what the United States went through four decades ago. Nevertheless, the 1930's seem to be coming closer and closer to our present concerns, despite the vast differences in virtually every aspect of our national life. Publishers have suddenly found a market for books on the great depression. After a long period of virtual oblivion, the 1930's are apparently staging a comeback in the public interest, though serious scholarly study has barely begun.

Then as now, revolutionists thought that they were living in a revolutionary age. According to the Communists, the postwar world had entered its "third period." The first one, the theory went, beginning with the Russian Revolution of 1917 and ending with the German defeat of 1921 or 1923, depending on the source, had been a period of "acute revolutionary crisis." Then came the second period of capitalist recovery or, as it was called in Communist terminology, "partial stabilization." The third period was somewhat prematurely proclaimed in 1928 as the renewal of the "revolutionary upsurge," taking up where the first one had left off. With the Wall Street crash in October 1929, reality seemed to have caught up with the theory.

In the American annals of the third period and the revolutionary upsurge, Gastonia came first. It took place before the Wall Street crash and in as unlikely a place as one could have imagined. Little or no attention has been paid to it in the recent books on the depression.[1] Yet it may hold a special interest for the

[1] Gastonia is not mentioned in Edward Robb Ellis, *A Nation in Torment: The Great American Depression 1929–1939* (New York: Coward-McCann, 1970), or Studs

present revolutionary generation—not because it suggests how similar a previous revolutionary generation was but rather how different it was. For one generation, revolution may mean a change in "consciousness"; for another, it meant going to Gastonia or its equivalents. The story is worth retelling both for its own sake and for what it tells about the difference between yesterday and today.

## I

Gastonia, the largest town in Gaston County, North Carolina, called itself "the South's City of Spindles." The county, named after an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, was first settled by Scotch-Irish, Germans—or, as they were commonly called, Pennsylvania-Dutch—and Scottish Highlanders. The number of spindles in the county increased from 3,000 in 1848 to 1,200,000 in 1930, making it the first in the state, first in the South, and third in the United States. The town of Gastonia grew from a population of 236 in 1877, when it was incorporated, to about 30,000 in 1930. Mountaineer folk from the Piedmont range came down to escape the exhaustion of their lands and the bleakness of their lives. They made up most of the labor force in the textile mills which increased in number in Gastonia from seven in 1900 to about 40 in 1930. Negroes made up only about 15 per cent of the population of Gaston County, and few of them worked in the textile mills, which were reserved for "poor whites."

The largest mill in Gastonia was the Loray Mill, built in 1900. It was located a few miles from the town proper in Loray Village, a typical "company town" of the period. Originally controlled by local interests, it was sold to the Jenckes Spinning Company of Rhode Island in 1919 which merged with the Manville Company of the same state in 1923 to form the Manville-Jenckes Company. The Loray Mill was the first in the county to be owned and op-

Terkel, *Hard Times* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1970), or Cabell Phillips, *From the Crash to the Blitz 1929–1939* (New York: Macmillan, 1969), or Gene Smith, *The Shattered Dream* (New York: William Morrow, 1970). The most recent book, as far as I know, that dealt with Gastonia in any detail was Irving Bernstein, *The Lean Years* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1960), pp. 20–28.

erated by Northern interests, which increasingly moved south in search of cheap labor after the depression came to the textile industry, North and South, in 1921. Women and children made up a large part of the mill hands. The normal work week was 55 hours, though 60 hours were not uncommon. Wages in the mid-nineteen twenties ranged from a high of $4.36 a day for men to a low of $1.81 for women. In 1926, the average textile worker in New England earned $21.49 for a 48-hour week; the average textile worker in the South earned $15.81 for a 55-hour week.[2]

Yet revolt or even protest seemed hopeless here. The power of the mill owners and managers extended far beyond the factories. The workers were herded into isolated villages in which the companies owned their shacks, provided what schools there were, paid the teachers if any, ran the stores, extended credit, built the churches, subsidized the ministers, and administered "law and order" through mill guards, company spies and deputy sheriffs.[3] Trade unions had never been able to gain a foothold in this economic and social soil, though a few had tried since the Knights of Labor in the 1880's. The most ambitious effort had been made by the A.F. of L.'s United Textile Workers of America in 1919–1920. One of its strikes had taken place in Gastonia at the Loray Mill in October 1919. Over 750 workers had stayed out for several weeks in protest against the discharge of a few union members—to no avail.[4] After a promising start, the U.T.W. was

[2] Liston Pope, *Millhands and Preachers: A Study of Gastonia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1942); Joseph H. Separk, ed., *Gastonia and Gaston County* (Gastonia, N.C.: Joseph H. Separk, 1936); *Working Conditions of the Textile Industry in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee:* Hearings Before the Committee on Manufactures, U.S. Senate, 71st Congress, 1st Session, May 8, 9, and 20, 1929 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1929), and John Garrett Van Osdell, Jr., *Cotton Mills, Labor, and the Southern Mind, 1880–1930,* unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Tulane University, 1966.

[3] Detailed and sometimes vivid descriptions of the "mill villages" may be found in Herbert J. Lahne, *The Cotton Mill Worker* (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1944), ch. 4; Glenn Gilman, *Human Relations in the Industrial Southeast: A Study of the Textile Industry* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1956), pp. 149–69; Myra Page, *Southern Cotton Mills and Labor* (New York: Workers Library Publishers, 1929), pp. 43–57; and Tom Tippett, *When Southern Labor Stirs* (New York: Jonathan Cape and Harrison Smith, 1931), pp. 8–34.

[4] Pope, *op. cit.,* p. 223.

forced to retreat from the South and barely succeeded in surviving in the North. For half a century, the South seemed to be the graveyard of American trade unionism in general and of textile organization in particular.[5]

Yet, early in 1929, mill towns in Tennessee, South Carolina, and North Carolina exploded with the pent-up desperation and rage of thousands of textile workers. The impetus came mainly from two sources. On the one hand, northern firms took with them alien methods and attitudes as they moved south. In order to rescue the disappearing profit margin, they became devotees of "scientific management" and "efficiency engineering," often in a naive, crude form.[6] On the other hand, the unions began to realize that it was necessary for them to follow the manufacturers southward in order to survive. A Piedmont Organizing Council was formed in 1927, and the A.F. of L. convention in New Orleans in 1928 promised to help in a Southern organizing drive. But no one was prepared for the outburst that followed.

The first detonation came at the rayon plants of the German-owned Glantzstoff and Bemberg plants at Elizabethton, Tennessee on March 12, 1929. Their 5,000 employees walked out, protesting against an average wage of $9.20 for a 56-hour week. The workers, most of them women, struck first and then called in organizers of the U.T.W. to lead them. On March 15, 1929, spontaneous strikes began to break out in South Carolina. In one mill after another, workers walked out without benefit of any union. As many as ten thousand workers took part in these unionless South Carolina strikes in which the leadership was assumed by independent, locally-elected strike committees. Thus Gastonia was part of a much larger phenomenon.[7]

[5] See Robert R. R. Brooks, *The United Textile Workers of America,* unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1935; George Sinclair Mitchell, *Textile Unionism and the South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1931), ch. 2; Robert W. Dunn and Jack Hardy, *Labor and Textiles* (New York: International Publishers, 1931), chs. 9 and 10; Lahne, *op. cit.,* chs. 13–15.

[6] Gilman, *op. cit.,* pp. 180–185; Pope, *op. cit.,* pp. 232–233.

[7] The Tennessee and South Carolina strikes are treated in Van Osdell, *op. cit.,* Mitchell, *op. cit.,* Tippett, *op. cit.*

The Loray Mill in Gastonia had been one of the more profitable operations. Nevertheless, it was apparently the first in the South to introduce the new "efficiency" methods. In effect, this meant increasing the work-load per operator, often at less pay. This system, known as the "stretch-out," was put into effect in the Loray Mill in 1927. It was so effective that F. L. Jenckes, President of the Manville-Jenckes Company, wrote to his Resident Agent in Gastonia on November 8, 1927, congratulating him on cutting $500,000 a year from the Loray payroll without decreasing production. Jenckes encouraged him to cut twice as much a year "and still keep your production up." [8] As a result, the mill reduced the number of workers in fifteen months from 3,500 to 2,200 without decreasing production. At the same time, wages went down sharply.[9] About fifty men struck against the stretch-out and a wage-cut, without success, at the Loray Mill in March 1928, and other signs multiplied that more trouble was coming.[10] As in other places, no union was necessary to stir up the mill hands. One worker explained: "It used to be you could git five, ten minutes rest now and then, so's you could bear the mill. But now you got to keep a-runnin' all the time. Never a minute to get your breath all the long day. I used to run six drawing frames and now I got to look after ten. You just kain't do it. A man's dead beat at night." [11]

## II

A curious chain of circumstances led the Communists to Gastonia. The stretch-out at the Loray Mill happened to coincide with the shift in Communist trade union policy. The National Textile Workers Union of America was set up by the Commu-

[8] This letter was apparently taken by a worker in a photostating company and first reproduced in the *Daily Worker,* August 24, 1929, p. 1. It was reproduced in Fred E. Beal, *Proletarian Journey,* (New York: Hillman-Curl, 1937), pp. 144–45.

[9] Pope, *op. cit.,* p. 230; Louis Stark, *The New Republic,* May 8, 1929, p. 324.

[10] Pope, *op. cit.,* pp. 233–36.

[11] Margaret Larkin, "Tragedy in North Carolina," *North American Review,* December 1929, p. 687.

nists in September 1928. It was the second "dual union" formed in accordance with the new line within the framework of the Trade Union Educational League, renamed the following year the Trade Union Unity League. It was based totally on the northern textile factories; not a single delegate represented the South at the founding convention.[12] For both the union and the party, the South was virtually *terra incognita.* The first Communist to include the South in a speaking tour was Benjamin Gitlow, the Vice-Presidential candidate, in the fall of 1928.[13] On the eve of the Gastonia strike, in March 1929, the party was reported as having only one or two units in the entire South.[14] The nearest district office was located in Philadelphia. Party literature almost completely ignored the South; it was not mentioned in a review of trade-union "tasks" at the end of 1928.[15]

Nevertheless, a start was made on January 1, 1929.[16] On that

[12] Sam Wiseman, "The Textile Workers Organize Their Union," *Labor Unity,* October 1928, pp. 10–12.

[13] John H. Owens, "Problems of the Communists in the South," *Daily Worker,* February 25, 1929, p. 6. Gitlow mentions his speeches in Houston and San Antonio in *I Confess* (New York: Dutton, 1939), p. 505.

[14] "Huiswood Gives Party Report on Negro Work," *Daily Worker,* March 9, 1929, p. 2. Five factory nuclei in the South were reported the following month *(ibid.,* April 10, 1929, p. 4).

[15] Wm. Z. Foster, "New Tasks of the T.U.E.L.," *Labor Unity,* October 1928, pp. 1, 18–20.

[16] Fred E. Beal, *op. cit.,* p. 118.

Some confusion has been introduced on the origins of the N.T.W.-Communist organizing campaign in Gastonia by a useful but partially misguided unpublished M.A. dissertation by Robin Hood, *The Loray Mill Strike* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1932). The author obtained much of his alleged information on the Communists from company agents. Thus, he mistakenly has the N.T.W. surveying the possibility of organizing the Loray Mill as early as September 1928 (p. 31), the month the union was first organized; he says the Gastonia union was organized six months before the strike of April 1929, which would put it in October 1928 (p. 45); and he incorrectly identifies William F. Dunne as "at that time secretary of the Communist Party in America" (p. 128). Unfortunately, an otherwise valuable work leans too heavily on the Hood dissertation and repeats some of its unfounded stories (Irving Bernstein, *The Lean Years* [Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1960], p. 21). The official Communist pamphlet said that Beal was sent to Gastonia by the N.T.W. in February 1929 (William F. Dunne, *Gastonia: Citadel of the Class Struggle in the New South* [New York: Workers Library Publishers, 1929], p. 19). The safest guide seems to be Beal's autobiography.

day two N.T.W. organizers, Fred E. Beal and Mario Thumudo, arrived in Charlotte, North Carolina. They drove down from the North on the cheapest form of locomotion available—a motorcycle. Thumudo left a few weeks later because the union could not support both of them in the South. Not that it was able to support Beal very handsomely: he was ashamed to walk in the streets, he later confessed, because his clothes were so torn and he was "practically barefooted." [17]

Beal was a thirty-three-year-old New Englander, a "big, red-haired, heavy-faced young man," as one observer saw him,[18] who had started working in a textile factory at the age of fourteen in Lawrence, Mass. He belonged more than anything else to the syndicalist tradition and had joined the I.W.W. in his youth. In the early nineteen-twenties, he had shifted to the Socialist Party instead of to the Communist Party. Whatever his politics, he was primarily a trade-union organizer and had tried to set up an independent textile union in New England, more syndicalist than A.F. of L. or Communist. On his own, however, he could do little, and his idea of independent unionism brought him closer to the Communists as they began to change their line. Early in 1928, he obtained Communist support to set up textile mill committees as the first stage of a new national union. He had a knack for getting to trouble spots first, as he demonstrated in 1928 by handing out the first leaflets calling for a strike at New Bedford, Mass. This strike lasted almost six months and laid the basis for the National Textile Workers Union. But Beal emerged from the strike with more prestige outside than inside the new union. He was not trusted or considered important enough to become one of its officers, all of whom were Communists of much longer standing. After the New Bedford strike ended in October, he was sent off as Southern Organizer with little more than the title. The entire Southern organizing campaign was

[17] *Ibid.*, p. 110.

[18] T. S. Mathews, "Gastonia in Court," *The New Republic*, September 18, 1929, p. 120.

directed by the N.T.W.'s first Secretary, Albert Weisbord, who was also the party's textile representative. He worked out the "rolling wave strike strategy" which meant, in practice, starting in a single mill and extending the strike to one or more mills at a time as circumstances permitted.[19]

As Beal later told the story, he stopped at the home of the one functioning, nearly blind Communist party member in Charlotte. A union convert in Charlotte, who had a brother working at the Loray Mill in Gastonia, told him that it was the key to organizing the entire South. Until then, Beal admitted, "Gastonia had been just another name to me, another dot on the industrial map of the South." He made his way to Gastonia, about twenty miles west of Charlotte, in mid-March 1929, though he was not the first union organizer there. Edward F. McGrady, the A.F. of L.'s legislative representative, and a Department of Labor representative, had already tried to talk the employers of Gastonia into recognizing "an American conducted union." McGrady related regretfully: "We failed to get the employers to do anything; and the Communists went in."[20] The Communists—in the person of one tattered, virtually penniless, stranger from the North—went in without going to the employers. Beal succeeded in winning over a single, local mill worker. They cautiously decided to set up a secret union local and begin by taking in a few members only. Then Beal hurried back to New York to ask for help. When he returned to Charlotte, he received a wire from Gastonia: "Fired today. What will I do about it?"

[19] Weisbord gave his side of the story in *Class Struggle* (December 1, 1931, pp. 7–9), the mimeographed organ of the Communist League of Struggle, which he founded after his expulsion from the Communist Party. Weisbord stated that the rolling wave strike strategy "proposed by myself was unanimously adopted by the N.T.W.U. and approved by the Polcom [Political Committee or Bureau] of the C.P. itself" (*ibid.*, p. 8). After his expulsion from the union, his successor, Clarence Miller, blamed him for the rolling wave strike strategy and charged that it meant suffering a defeat in one mill only to go on to a defeat in another mill (*Labor Unity*, January 4, 1930, p. 5).

[20] Testimony of Edward F. McGrady, *Investigation of Communist Propaganda:* Hearings Before a Special Committee to Investigate Communist Activities in the United States (Fish Committee), House of Representatives, 71st Congress, 2nd Session (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1930), Part I, Vol. 1, p. 126 (June 1930).

In Beal's absence, a number of Loray workers had been signed up for the secret union local. When Beal got back to Gastonia, they were called to a secret meeting to discuss the new development. The workers were far more militant than Beal, who hesitated at the call for a strike. Swept away by the meeting's fervor, Beal agreed to an open meeting "behind the mill" the following Saturday afternoon, March 30. Meanwhile, the first reinforcements arrived. The New York headquarters sent him the union's second Vice-President, Ellen Dawson, "a wee bit of a girl" from Scotland, who had come out of the New England mill wars. Another newcomer, representing the Youth Communist League, was George Pershing, cousin of General John J. Pershing, the American Commander-in-Chief in World War I.

The Saturday meeting convinced Beal that a strike could not be avoided, even though he did not yet have a union headquarters in town. On Monday morning, April 1, the mill dismissed five union members. Another open meeting that afternoon of night-shift workers endorsed a strike enthusiastically. Thus began the "revolutionary upsurge" at Gastonia.[21]

The Communist leadership in the North quickly realized what a windfall Gastonia was. It had been anxiously scanning the horizon for signs of the third period in the United States, and it eagerly seized on Gastonia as just what it had been looking for. If a single Communist organizer could set off such an explosion in far-off North Carolina, where no Communist organizer had ever ventured before, where the workers were supposed to be the most inaccessible and most impenetrable—the "purest," white, native American stock, the most exploited and oppressed, the most easily replaceable, the least exposed to politics or even education—what could not be done in the rest of the country? If Gastonia was the beginning, what might not be the end?

At this very moment, however, the party leadership was far more engrossed in its own crisis than in faraway Gastonia. The inquisition of the Lovestoneites kept the major leaders in Mos-

[21] I have followed the account in Beal's autobiography, *Proletarian Journey, op. cit.*, pp. 123–135. Other versions differ slightly.

cow all through April and May. It was also a time of doldrums for the Communist trade union movement as a whole. The *Daily Worker* was temporarily bereft of news of a single strike in which Communists were engaged. The new National Textile Workers Union was still recovering from the exhausting struggle in New Bedford the year before.

In different ways, all these roads led to Gastonia. It heralded, as Earl Browder, who had just returned from China and was starting on his meteoric rise to the top leadership, soon put it, "the opening of a new period in the American class struggle." [22] It came as a welcome relief from the party's own depressing internal disorder. The N.T.W.'s and T.U.E.L.'s relatively meager forces were not tied down elsewhere and could be totally mobilized to bear down on one small town in North Carolina.

Ironically, the Communists would never have called such a strike on such short notice with so little preparation in the North. They were precipitated into it in the South by the Loray workers' impulsive eruption and by their own need to prove that they were right about the "new period." But one experienced Communist trade unionist, Jack Johnstone, who replaced Weisbord as the party and T.U.E.L. representative at Gastonia, analyzed the Southern textile strikes in general and the Gastonia strike in particular without illusions. The Southern textile workers, he reported, "know little of the theory and practice of revolutionary or even trade union struggle." They knew nothing of the differences between the United Textile Workers and the National Textile Workers, the A.F. of L. and the T.U.E.L., the Socialist Party and the Communist Party. As a result, they wholeheartedly accepted the leadership of the "reactionary" U.T.W. in Tennessee and the revolutionary N.T.W. in Gastonia. They were mountaineers and poor farmers "just going through the process of proletarianization." He warned the Communists against riding "the crests of a strike wave, to merely blunder on and blunder

[22] *Labor Unity*, April 27, 1929, p. 6.

through." [23] He also told some home truths about the Gastonia strike specifically. The N.T.W. had sent an organizer to Tennessee, where the workers had gone out on strike first, but he had arrived too late, after they had gone back to work. So he was instructed to proceed to Greenville, S.C., where one of the unionless strikes was taking place. No sooner had he left Tennessee than the workers there came out a second time. By this time, the N.T.W. had decided on Gastonia as its best bet. Johnstone was highly critical of the way the Gastonia strike was handled. "At the time of the strike call," he pointed out, "not one piece of printed literature had been circulated in Gastonia. The campaign had been confined to a house to house campaign as a means of making first connection. Forty-seven members had joined the union secretly until the five were discharged. It was these forty-seven members that declared for a strike, calling only one mass meeting, at which some 800 workers out of 2,000 attended, to endorse the strike." At this meeting, he added, most Loray workers heard about the union for the first time. Johnstone judged the whole procedure severely: "The calling of the 2,200 workers on strike of the Loray mill because five out of forty-seven union members were discharged, to say the least, was a hasty and panicky act." [24]

[23] J. W. Johnstone, "New Problems Raised by Strike Wave in Southern Textiles," *ibid.*, May 11, 1929, p. 5.

[24] J. W. Johnstone, "Problems in Strike Strategy Raised by Southern Textile Strikes," *ibid.*, May 25, 1929, p. 5. It is not clear whether Beal was the organizer who was first sent to Tennessee; Beal does not mention any such circumstance. Johnstone suggests that the N.T.W. knew there was a strike wave blowing up in the South and wanted to get into it somewhere, not necessarily at Gastonia. Johnstone's figures also cannot be confirmed elsewhere. Beal never gives a definite figure for the secret union membership at the time the five were discharged, and he refers to "several thousand workers" at the first open meeting (*Proletarian Journey*, p. 126). Inasmuch as the Loray workers numbered 2,200 in all, "several thousand workers" would seem hardly credible. It should be noted that Johnstone published this article in the T.U.E.L. organ less than two months after the strike broke out, based on the information he gathered on the spot; Beal's memoirs came out eight years later. Evidently based on an interview with Beal in 1939, Pope says that "several union members were dismissed" and "at least one thousand attended" the first public meeting on March 30 (p. 240). Unfortunately, none of the existing secondary

What made Gastonia a *cause célèbre* was not so much the strike as the strike-breaking. A large majority of Loray's 2,200 workers, possibly as many as 1,800 or 2,000, walked out.[25] The mill was virtually shut down for two or three days. Public opinion in Gastonia was not initially unfriendly to the strikers, and Communism was not at first an issue. It was difficult to scare the workers with something so completely outside their knowledge and experience.[26] But the Communists were determined to make no compromise with Southern prejudices and waged the strike as if it were taking place in the North. Among their demands, which were otherwise quite moderate, was the 40-hour 5-day working week, then unattainable in the North and far less feasible in the South. Mass demonstrations, picketing and parades upset the equanimity of the once somnolent mill village and town. The Manville-Jenckes Company, ironically a Northern corporation, appealed to the deepest Southern prejudices against "furriners." It succeeded in getting the National Guard sent in as early as the fourth day of the strike. Court injunctions forbade all strike activity. One observer, an opponent of Communism in the labor movement, reported: "The strikers were clubbed and beaten in the streets and carted off to jail *en masse*." He marvelled at the reaction: "Their parades were broken up by force every day, and just as consistently the strikers would form again the following day to march, with full knowledge of what they were doing, into the clubs and rifles." [27]

These tactics and sheer hunger drove many workers back into the mills; the company was able also to recruit replacements from the outside. A careful student concluded that "the strike as a strike" was defeated by April 15 at which time the Loray mills were virtually back to normal production.[28] Another union might

sources made much use of *Labor Unity*, and therefore missed Johnstone's important articles.

[25] Tippett, *op. cit.*, p. 76; Pope, *op. cit.*, p. 257.

[26] Beal, *op. cit.*, p. 138; Van Osdell, *op. cit.*, pp. 148–149.

[27] Tippett, *op. cit.*, pp. 86–87.

[28] Pope, *op. cit.*, p. 249.

well have decided to cut its losses and get out of Gastonia. But the N.T.W. was determined to show that it was not an ordinary union. Gastonia was its first opportunity to demonstrate that it was a "revolutionary" union that could not be intimidated by violence or discouraged by any obstacles or setbacks. The novelty of a Communist-led strike in the South and the daily street battles attracted nation-wide publicity. Isolated and alone, the N.T.W. together with the Gastonia workers were no match for the Manville-Jenckes Company, the local press, state and city governments, courts, National Guardsmen, deputy sheriffs, and vigilante bands. To carry on this unequal struggle, the N.T.W., backed by the Communist Party, mobilized all its resources outside Gastonia and the South. Improbable as it seemed, the Communist movement took on the established order in Loray Village, in the town of Gastonia, in the county of Gaston, and in the state of North Carolina in a fight to the finish.

The main Communist forces came from the union, the party, the youth league, the Workers International Relief, and the International Labor Defense. All in all, according to one study, at least twenty-three Communist organizers, in various guises, took part in the Gastonia strike.[29] Some stayed for a few days or weeks; and arrests made numerous replacements necessary. They worked through local strike committees which carried on much of the day-by-day activity. Among the most prominent Communist leaders who came down were Albert Weisbord, until mid-1929 the party's textile representative and secretary of the N.T.W., Jack Johnstone and Bill Dunne for the T.U.E.L. and Communist Party, Alfred Wagenknecht, National Secretary of the Workers International Relief, a party auxiliary, Juliet Stuart Poyntz, National Secretary of the International Labor Defense, another auxiliary, and Otto Hall, head of the T.U.E.L.'s Negro Department. By far the main burden of the struggle was borne by the full-time organizers who stayed in Gastonia for extended periods—Beal, Ellen Dawson, Vera Buch, Joseph Harrison, Clar-

[29] *Ibid.*, p. 244.

ence Miller, and Sophie Melvin for the N.T.W.; Amy Schechter and then Caroline Drew for the W.I.R.; Karl Marx Reeve for the I.L.D.; George Pershing and then Simon Gerson for the Y.C.L.; and Edith Saunders Miller who represented the Young Pioneers of America, the Communist children's organization. Behind them were mustered the entire party and its sympathizers, holding meetings, collecting funds, making Gastonia a battle-cry heard throughout the country. By mid-1929, the entire Communist world took up the cause of Gastonia. Protest demonstrations were staged in England, Germany, Denmark and elsewhere. For a few months, Gastonia was lifted out of mill-town obscurity and made into a symbol of all that was wrong with the capitalist system.

Yet, in Gastonia itself, the Communists fought against hopeless odds. That they managed to get started was far less remarkable than that they were able to carry on for so long. For Northerners who were also Communists to come into this southern town and win the confidence of so many workers in its biggest factory was no small feat. It required extraordinary reserves of courage, discipline, and determination. On April 18, a band of masked men wrecked the union headquarters and demolished the W.I.R.'s relief store. They dumped the food into the street, doused it with kerosene, and set it afire. Nearby troops arrived on the scene as soon as the damage was done—and arrested Amy Schechter and some strikers. Released, she soon distributed food from a truck on the streets. A hard core of workers refused to abandon the union. In May, the company forcibly evicted strikers from their homes. The W.I.R. set up tents for them. On June 7, a gun fight took place before the tent colony, Chief of Police O. F. Aderholt was fatally shot, union organizer Harrison was seriously wounded, three deputies were slightly wounded. A reign of terror followed. "The residents of the tent colony were hunted like wild beasts," one observer wrote. "They fled from their homes into the woods to escape the fury of the mob." [30] Many did not flee far enough. After about 75 were arrested, thirteen

[30] Tippett, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

men and three women, including seven Northerners, Beal, Harrison, Miller, George Carter (a late arrival), Schechter, Buch and Melvin, were charged with "conspiracy" to murder Aderholt. In the end, seven of the men were convicted, the four Northerners sentenced to prison terms of 17 to 20 years, the three Southerners to lesser sentences. Before the trial ended, the union tried to hold a mass meeting near the Loray Mill on September 14. An armed band attacked a truck filled with workers bound for the meeting from a neighboring town, Bessemer City. A shot killed the 29-year old mother of five children, Ella May Wiggins, union organizer, I.L.D. secretary and bard extraordinary of Bessemer City.[31] The most popular of her "song ballets," as she called them, began:

Come all of you good people and listen to what I tell;
The story of Chief Aderholt, the man you all knew well.
It was on one Friday evening, the seventh day of June,
He went down to the union ground and met his fatal doom.

The song ended:

We're going to have a union all over the South,
Where we can wear good clothen and live in a better house,
Now we must stand together and to the boss reply
We'll never, no, we'll never let our leaders die . . .[32]

## III

Such were the ordeals which Communist organizers suffered in Gastonia. For six months, they persisted in the face of mass hysteria, whipped up by the local press and officialdom; mob violence, instigated and often led by well-known community figures; and flagrant legal perversion, which permitted Ella May's murderers to go unpunished. The Communists were not the only ones to get this kind of treatment. The U.T.W. had not been permitted to organize in Gastonia or anywhere else in the South. In Elizabethton, Tenn., two A.F. of L. officials were seized by an armed band, driven out of the state, and threatened with death if

[31] *Daily Worker,* January 14, 1930, p. 1.
[32] Margaret Larkin, "Ella May's Songs," *The Nation,* October 9, 1929, p. 382.

they came back. The National Guard, injunctions, mass dismissals, tear gas and hunger helped to break the strike. The U.T.W. held on for two months before it settled, largely on the employers' terms. The bloodiest of all the southern textile strikes broke out in July 1929 at Marion, North Carolina. The U.T.W. was also called into it, though a major role was played by a more militant, non-Communist left-wing group from the Brookwood Labor College and the Conference for Progressive Labor Action, the so-called "Musteites." After three months of turmoil, troops, evictions, arson, dynamiting, deputies shot and killed six strikers, most of them in the back, and wounded many more. A union organizer was sentenced to a fine and jail and three strikers were sent to the chain-gang for an earlier incident, but the deputies who killed the six workers were easily acquitted. That strike also came to an end in blood.[32]

Thus Gastonia was in no sense unique as a strike. What made it different was the Communist factor which the employers were only too willing to exploit, even if they might not have behaved very differently without it. The Communists were, for reasons of their own, in no mood to make it difficult for them to raise the issue. For Gastonia happened to be the testing ground of the "third period" and "class against class." [34] When Dunne came to sum up the experiences at Gastonia, he emphasized the need to build up the party in the South speedily because "the 'third period' does not wait." [35] When the *Daily Worker* reported the sentencing of the seven Gastonia defendants, it commented editorially that "the Gastonia fight is CLASS AGAINST CLASS." [36] The new political line was not designed to encourage fine dis-

[33] Tippett and Van Osdell devote chapters to the Elizabethton and Marion strikes. Other works cited deal with them less extensively, but do not differ on the main facts.

[34] The slogan, "class against class," was introduced at the end of 1927 and came to mean that only the Communists represented the working class, thereby providing a rationale for treating all other parties and groups, especially the Social-Democrats, as representatives of the enemy class.

[35] *Daily Worker,* October 8, 1929, p. 4.

[36] *Ibid.,* October 22, 1929, p. 1.

tinctions between the union and the party or the party and its auxiliaries. The "revolutionary upsurge" demanded that all of them should work for the revolution as well as for the 40-hour working week and company houses with bathtubs.

In the first week of the strike, George Pershing declared publicly that the Communists intended to operate the Loray and all other mills by a general committee made up of one representative from each department.[37] "This strike is the first shot in a battle which will be heard around the world," Albert Weisbord orated. "It will prove as important in transforming the social and political life of this country as the Civil War itself." [38] Communist propaganda poured into Gastonia which had never before known a Communist paper or leaflet—200,000 copies of the *Daily Worker* and 1,500,000 other pieces of literature.[39] When Ella May Wiggins was killed, union and party issued a joint leaflet, signed by Hugo Oehler, who had replaced Beal as N.T.W. organizer, and Bill Dunne for the Communist Party, calling for a one-day protest strike. The main slogans in the leaflet were: "Every mill worker into the National Textile Workers Union" and "Every class conscious worker into the Communist Party." [40] At the Gastonia trial, Edith Saunders Miller testified she had taught the Gastonia children on behalf of the Young Pioneers that "the present government is capitalist government, and that we need a government of the workers and farmers." The prosecution counsel led her on: "Like the Soviet Government of Russia that destroyed private property, eh?" She readily agreed.[41] The *Daily Worker* praised her testimony: "This Communist working woman sought to tear off the blindfolds of religion and capitalist ideas from the masses. In so doing she did her Communist duty as will be proven by the spread of Communist influence among the

[37] Pope, *op. cit.*, p. 243; Beal, *op. cit.*, p. 137.
[38] Tippett, *op. cit.*, p. 81.
[39] Dunne, *Daily Worker*, October 8, 1929, p. 4.
[40] *Daily Worker*, September 17, 1929, p. 1.
[41] *Ibid.*, October 16, 1929, p. 3.

proletariat of the South." [42] In many other southern cities, the W.I.R. showed a film, "A Trip to the Soviet Union," along with its relief activities.[43]

Gastonia also marked the first time that, as one Negro Communist put it, the Communists came "squarely up against the Negro question in its most acute form." [44] Gaston County was white by a ratio of over six to one. Few Negroes, possibly less than one per cent and certainly no more than five per cent, worked in the Loray mill.[45] In earlier years, the party had paid lip-service to the need for organizing black and white workers together but had done little about it in the North and nothing in the South. In 1928, however, the Comintern's Resolution on The Negro Question had strictly enjoined: "Every effort must be made to see that all the new unions organized by the left wing and the Communist Party should embrace the workers of all nationalities and of all races." [46] And every effort was made, even in Gastonia.

Weisbord wrote to Beal at the end of the strike's third week: "On the Negro question, there must be absolutely no compromise." He instructed Beal and all the other Communists in Gastonia to "lead the way by personally fraternizing with the Negro workers, making them your personal friends." But he made one concession—it was not necessary "at this stage of the game" to advise white Southern workers to intermarry or have Negro friends.[47] Weisbord himself first injected the racial issue into the strike by coming down to Gastonia and publicly demanding full Negro-white equality, much to the consternation of the

[42] *Ibid.*, October 19, p. 1.

[43] Caroline Drew, *ibid.*, April 4, 1930, p. 4. Beal refers to "talks about Russia and other topics" in the evenings (*op. cit.*, pp. 158–159).

[44] Cyril Briggs, "The Negro Question in the Southern Textile Strikes," *The Communist*, June 1929, p. 324.

[45] Pope, *op. cit.*, pp. 12, 245. Beal says that only two Negroes worked in the Loray mill "and they fled when the strike started" (*op. cit.*, p. 140).

[46] *The Communist Position on the Negro Question* (New York: Workers Library Publishers, 1929), p. 59.

[47] Albert Weisbord, "My Expulsion from the Communist Party," *Class Struggle*, December 1, 1929, p. 9.

Communist organizers on the spot and to the delight of the local anti-union press. Johnstone also met with resistance on the "Negro question" from the Communists in Gastonia. He discovered that there were no Negroes in the Gastonia local and that the white workers were most unwilling to take them in. In a desperate effort to fit the theory to the reality, he came out for an unorthodox halfway house. The Communists, he proposed, should make every effort to organize white and black workers together in the same union. But if this proved to be impossible, he thought it best to settle for separate, predominantly Negro locals until white prejudice could be overcome.[48] Leading Negro Communists in the North were so enraged by this suggestion that they apparently sent a cable to Moscow denouncing it.[49] When Weisbord himself was removed from the leadership in the summer of 1929, the chief charge against him was that of "white chauvinism," evidently based on his view that full union equality did not oblige white workers to make personal friends of Negro workers.[50] Johnstone, however, was never punished for his far more serious deviation of endorsing separate black locals. Disliked and distrusted by all the other leaders, embittered by his own frustrated ambitions, Weisbord was made to play the thankless role of scapegoat.

Yet some progress was made, only to fall short of the ideologically high standards set by the Communist leadership in the

[48] *Labor Unity,* June 8, 1929, p. 5. This article by Johnstone himself confirms Weisbord's version: "He [Johnstone] proposed in a written series of motions that the N.T.W.U. build TWO UNIONS in the South, one for Negroes, one for whites, declaring that the Negroes themselves wanted this!" (*Class Struggle,* December 1, 1929, p. 8, caps. in original). Weisbord says that Browder supported Johnstone (p. 9).

[49] Weisbord, *op. cit.,* p. 9.

[50] Johnstone was evidently referring to Weisbord when he wrote:

"One organizer tries to meet the situation by telling the white workers that full equality in the union does not mean that they have to invite Negroes to their houses, or eat with them; that Jim Crow in other places: school, railroad, waiting room, etc., was not the concern of the union, that other organizations would take care of that. This is not fighting white chauvinism—this is retreating before it" (*Labor Unity,* June 8, 1929, p. 5).

North. The leadership was scandalized to learn that Negro and white workers had been separated by a wire at a union meeting in Bessemer City. Johnstone was quickly sent to crack down on the local Communist organizers who had yielded to the device used by the larger strike committee. A few days on the scene discouraged him so much that he returned north—without permission—to put forward his separatist scheme.[51] Just before his own downfall, Weisbord was sent back to Gastonia to do what Johnstone had been unable to achieve, and the former managed to get the strike committee to vote for "full equality in the union"—a formula which still fell short of full social equality.[52] A leading Negro Communist, Otto Hall, was then dispatched to Gastonia as Central Committee representative to fight "white chauvinism in the ranks of the working class." He met so much resistance among the Communists themselves that he agreed to shunt the Negro workers into a branch of the American Negro Labor Congress, the party's Negro auxiliary, instead of taking them into the union. The Negro workers, according to the official account of this incident, lost faith in the new union and its Communist leadership. "This shameful retreat before white chauvinism the very first time we come up against the Southern race question cannot go uncensured," it warned sternly.[53]

And it did not go uncensured, whatever the local white workers and organizers might think. For some time, even the few Negroes who wanted to join the union were admittedly turned away because, as Johnstone reported, "we retreated before the white chauvinism of the white workers on strike."[54] But, pressed from above, the Communist organizers in Gastonia gradually succeeded in getting some results. Finally, Hall claimed, some members of the strike committee were convinced that it was

[51] Weisbord, *op. cit.*, p. 8. Briggs referred to this incident but changed Johnstone's name to "John Owens" (*op. cit.*, p. 327).

[52] Weisbord, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

[53] Briggs, *ibid.*, p. 327.

[54] *Labor Unity*, June 1, 1929, p. 5.

necessary to organize the Negro workers, who responded slowly to the sudden change of heart.[55] According to another source, some progress was made in converting the local strike committee to take in Negroes, but few of them chose to come in.[56]

To some, including apparently Beal himself, this intense, persistent stress on the "Negro question" in Gastonia was characteristic of the Communists' ideological extremism and unrealistic trade unionism.[57] The Negroes in the Loray mill seemed too few to count, the white workers' prejudices too strong to oppose. And, in fact, the conviction and fortitude necessary to fight "white chauvinism" in Gastonia in mid-1929 may well have required an extreme ideological position and "revolutionary trade unionism." The local pressures were so powerful that only those who responded to other, larger pressures were likely to withstand them. In this early, pristine phase of the "third period," the American Communists were trying to prove something to the world, to the Negroes, to the Comintern, and to themselves. If they were able to prove it in so unlikely a place as Gastonia, so much the better. From this point of view, the harder the test, the more glory there was in passing it. Thus Gastonia became a trial of faith and courage, and in the end the Communists had reason to feel that they came out of it with credit. The number of white workers converted or Negroes won over was far less important than the effort that went into it. In the end, even the Negro Communist who had warned that the "shameful retreat before white chauvinism" could not go uncensured, was willing to admit that the Communists in Gastonia, despite all their "mistakes and wobblings," had been an "honorable exception" to the general failure of the Communist-led unions to win the confidence of Negro workers that year.[58]

[55] *Ibid.*, Otto Hall, "A Negro Organizer's Experience in Gastonia," *ibid.*, June 22, 1929, p. 4. Beal refers to the pressure of Johnstone and Weisbord (*op. cit.*, pp. 140–142).

[56] Pope, *op. cit.*, pp. 245–246.

[57] Beal, *op. cit.*, p. 140.

[58] Cyril Briggs, "Our Negro Work," *The Communist*, September 1929, p. 498.

## IV

Gastonia soon became a legend. The official Communist pamphlet on Gastonia made it reach around the world: "The sharp struggle in Gastonia, reaching the point of armed conflict, furnishes irrefutable proof of the process by which the inner contradictions of capitalism in the imperialist period bring on economic struggles which speedily take on a *political* character. The struggle in Gastonia, and throughout the Southern textile industry, is not only an integral part of the international crisis in the textile industry (huge strikes in England, India, etc.) but a symptom of the world crisis of capitalism which leads straight and fast to a new imperialist war, to the direct danger of an imperialist attack on the Soviet Union, the fatherland of the world's working class, as the counter-revolutionary conspiracy in the Far East proves." [59] The party's chief recruiting pamphlet for the new period, issued in 1929, stated: "Gastonia is but the outstanding symbol of the developing class struggle throughout the United States and the world." [60] The party plenum in October 1929 decided: "The struggle in the South symbolized by Gastonia is the best proof of the growing radicalization of the working class in the 'third period.' " [61] Later, official Communist histories gave Gastonia credit for setting off the entire Southern strike wave in the textile mills, as if the U.T.W. strike at Elizabethton had not preceded the Communist strike at Gastonia.[62] In Moscow, the dead and wounded at Gastonia were held up as one of the

[59] William F. Dunne, *Gastonia: Citadel of the Class Struggle in the New South* (New York: Workers Library Publishers, 1929), p. 50.

[60] *Why Every Worker Should Join the Communist Party* (New York: Workers Library Publishers, 1929), p. 4.

[61] *Daily Worker,* October 17, 1929.

[62] "Gastonia was the spark that started a burning fever of strike revolts far and wide among the vast masses of Southern textile workers against the intolerable 'stretch-out' and low wage system" (William Z. Foster, *From Bryan to Stalin,* 1937, p. 234). "Their [N.T.W.'s] activities started a general movement among the textile workers . . ." (W. Z. Foster, *History of the Communist Party of the United States,* 1952, p. 251).

omens of the "approaching revolutionary situation." [63] A Comintern official foretold that America was "on the eve of immense proletarian struggles," the "warning rumbles" of which he claimed to hear "in the heroic strike struggle in Gastonia." [64]

The reality was something else. The Communist share of the Southern strike wave in 1929 was almost solely limited to Gastonia. The Communists made an effort to spread the strike in Gaston county, but the response in six or seven mills was short-lived.[65] Even at the outset the Gastonia strike did not embrace more than 2,000 workers. The Elizabethton, Marion and South Carolina strikes drew in over 15,000 workers under non-Communist leadership. All the strikers constituted a relatively small proportion of the 200,000 textile workers in Tennessee, North Carolina, and South Carolina, and even less of the 300,000 in the South as a whole. Moreover, the Loray mill was not typical of the South with respect to its ownership or its work force.[66] One peculiarity of the southern strike wave was the absentee ownership of the Elizabethton, Gastonia, and Marion mills, where the strikes were lost, and the local ownership of the South Carolina mills where the workers scored partial victories.[67] In addition, Gastonia lingered in the public consciousness for several months not because the strike as such was so successful but because the killing of Chief of Police Aderholt and the subsequent trial reminded Northerners of the Sacco-Vanzetti case.[68]

The Communists pulled out of Gastonia before the end of 1929. Most of the strikers also left the community. A year later, no Communist organizer could function in Gaston county. On August 18, 1930, another strike broke out a few miles from Gastonia

[63] Losovsky, *Protokoll: 10. Plenum des Exekutivkomitees der Kommunistischen Internationale,* p. 691. It was also presented in the same way by Minor (p. 562), Browder (p. 788) and the Theses (p. 895).

[64] N. Nasonov, *The Communist International,* Vol. IV, No. 24 (1929), p. 981.

[65] Johnstone, *Labor Unity,* June 1, 1929, p. 4.

[66] This is especially stressed by Van Osdell, *op. cit.,* p. 141.

[67] Mitchell, *op. cit.,* p. 80; Van Osdell, *op. cit.,* p. 126.

[68] "Another Sacco-Vanzetti Case?", *The Nation,* July 31, 1929, p. 106.

in Bessemer City, home of the martyred Ella May Wiggins. When some N.T.W. organizers put in an appearance, they were tied up and driven out of town by the strikers themselves. A.F. of L. representatives were also asked by the strikers to get out.[69] No union was able to establish itself in Gastonia for the rest of the decade. The U.T.W. succeeded in closing every mill in Gaston county in 1934, but the employers again benefited from the intervention of the state militia and beat off the A.F. of L. with the same tactics that had forced out the Communists.[70] The most thorough and fair-minded student of the Gastonia strike came to the conclusion that it had resulted in a long-term setback for trade unionism in the area. He found that "the outcome of the Loray strike has been one of the chief factors preventing subsequent union activity in the country," and that "The Gastonia strike and subsequent trials, rather than hastening the advent of bona fide trade unionism in the region, had really retarded readiness of workers to enter a policy of collective representation." [71]

The Communists themselves soon realized that something had gone wrong. What chiefly worried some of them was their unpreparedness and instability. A year later, the *Daily Worker* published two highly critical, retrospective accounts of the work in the South. One complained: "When the Party did come into the South it was ideologically and organizationally unprepared for the coming events. The Gastonia strike broke with almost elemental force over us and, although it was to a certain extent prepared for by the N.T.W.U., it nevertheless caught most of the left wing and the Party, hitherto paralyzed by the Lovestone opportunist theories, unprepared." The corps of N.T.W. organizers had been reduced from about a dozen in Mecklenburg and Gaston counties at the high point of the drive to about eight in four states.[72] The other criticism ran: "Our comrades entered

[69] Tippett, *op. cit.*, p. 171; Pope, *op. cit.*, pp. 313–314.
[70] Pope, *op. cit.*, p. 315.
[71] *Ibid.*, pp. 313–314.
[72] Si Gerson, *Daily Worker*, June 10, 1930, p. 4.

the South without any understanding of the peculiar conditions there." The workers "were many jumps ahead of us. We were overwhelmed with their response and militancy." The biggest trouble was lack of staying-power: "Our work in the South continued in a most disorganized manner. Organizers were sent in and withdrawn." By 1930, the party had shifted its interests from the textile mills of Gastonia and Charlotte to the heavy industry near Birmingham and Chattanooga.[73]

The N.T.W. was particularly prone to political deviationism. At the union's convention in December 1929, Weisbord, Eli Keller, his immediate successor, Ellen Dawson, Vera Buch and several others were unceremoniously expelled. Everything that had gone wrong was blamed on them, the former heroes of Passaic, New Bedford, and Gastonia. In the end, Beal proved to be one of the greatest disappointments. Against the wishes of the American party leadership, he and the other six convicted defendants jumped bail and fled to Soviet Russia. After much wavering and disillusionment, he secretly returned to the United States in 1933 and spent the next five years as a fugitive from justice. By this time fed up with all Communists, American as well as Russian, he published in 1937 an autobiography which committed the unforgivable sin of denouncing the Soviet Union as "the grandest fraud of history." [74] He was captured the following year, sent back to North Carolina to serve the rest of his prison sentence, and paroled in 1942. He died, impoverished and forgotten, in 1954. The original hero of the Gastonia strike, he was stricken from its history by his former comrades.[75]

[73] Sophie Melvin, *ibid.*, June 20, 1930, p. 4.

[74] Beal, *Proletarian Journey, op. cit.*, p. 351.

[75] In the 1929 pamphlet, *Gastonia: Citadel of the Class Struggle in the New South,* Dunne wrote: "The strike, led by the National Textile Workers Union, with Fred Beal in charge, became the rallying center for the working class of the Gastonia area" (p. 27). In 1937, William Z. Foster mentioned Beal solely as one of the defendants "who later turned traitor" and gave the chief credit to Dunne: "During most of this struggle the T.U.E.L. forces in Gastonia were led by Bill Dunne" (*From Bryan to Stalin,* p. 235).

Nevertheless, Gastonia was enshrined by Communists and non-Communists alike as the symbol and summit of the entire southern strike movement. At least six novels were in whole or in part inspired by it.[76] In the decade and a half following the Gastonia strike scholars lavished more attention on it than on any other textile strike. Very soon in the nineteen-thirties, Elizabethton, Marion and all the other strike-ridden towns all but passed out of the public consciousness, but Gastonia remained and was magnified. It was an enduring testimony partly to the inherently compelling events themselves and partly to the Communist gift for self-dramatization. It was, in its repercussions, less noteworthy as a strike than as a tragic drama. Indeed, some accounts pay more attention to the trial than to the strike itself.[77] Historically, it came at the end of one era and the beginning of another. In its failure to achieve its goals and to build for the future, it resembled the forlorn strikes of the nineteen-twenties. But it foreshadowed the nineteen-thirties because depression in the textile industry had preceded the great depression by almost a decade. Whatever the circumstances, the Communists demonstrated for the first time at Gastonia that they were ready and eager to break out of their ghetto-like shells in a few northern urban centers. Why Gastonia gave them the opportunity was explained most acutely by one of their most relentless enemies. "These southern workers know nothing about the philosophy of communism; they

When the Gastonia strike broke out, Dunne was returning from—of all places—Mongolia (*Labor Unity*, May 4, 1929, p. 6). He did not get to Gastonia until some weeks later, by which time the best days of the strike had long been over.

In 1952, Foster wrote about the Gastonia strike without mentioning Beal or Dunne, the latter having meanwhile been expelled (*History of the Communist Party of the United States*, 1952, p. 251).

[76] Mary Heaton Vorse, *Strike!* (New York: Horace Liveright, 1930); Sherwood Anderson, *Beyond Desire* (New York: Liveright, 1932); Fielding Burke, *Call Home the Heart* (New York: Longmans, Green, 1932); Grace Lumpkin, *To Make My Bread* (New York: Macaulay, 1932); Myra Page, *Gathering Storm* (New York: International, 1932); William Rollins, *The Shadow Before* (New York: Robert M. McBride, 1934).

[77] This is especially true of the partially idealized version in Samuel Yellen, *American Labor Struggles* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1936), pp. 306–316.

do not know what it means," said President William Green of the A.F. of L. "It is all Greek to them, but in their hour of distress, when they are rebelling against conditions they accept the support and help of anyone who extends the friendly hand." [78]

[78] *Working Conditions of the Textile Industry in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee, op. cit.*, p. 17.