quarters of these workers are Puerto Ricans; the rest came here from other Caribbean lands. Four thousand of these Spanish-speaking unionists are in New York's Dressmaker Local 22. They are represented on the local's executive board, as well as among the union's business agents, organizers and clerical workers. Together with the "old-timers" these union officers do their best to help the newcomers find a place in the industry and the union.

ILGWU contracts allow workers without funds to get working cards immediately, and to pay initiation and membership fees later on. If they have language problems they are urged to attend the union's English classes, and those who can operate only a sewing machine are told about training programs for new and more complicated machinery.

Many other ILGWU locals have introduced special English classes and other projects to help Spanish-speaking members. A number of business agents are learning Spanish so that they can understand and deal with these workers' problems.

Outside New York, and particularly in the South, the ILGWU often comes up against more bare-faced bias.

ILGWU's *Handbook of Trade Union Methods* deals with this problem:

> The ILGWU and other needle trades unions, founded largely by immigrant workers who had themselves been subject to generations of persecution, insist that neither race, sex, nor creed shall be a bar to membership. In cosmopolitan places like New York, with nationalities of all sorts jumbled together, prejudices of color and nationality are minimized. Negroes are made to feel at home, encouraged to serve on committees and assume office.
>
> But in other and newer organization centers, convention resolutions are not always followed. This is particularly true in the South, of course, where color lines are closely drawn. Here race prejudice is used by employers to prevent the organization not only of Negroes but of white workers as well.

St. Louis, Mo. is the headquarters of the ILGWU's Southwest Region; its 111 locals have a membership of over 15,000. In 1933, when the union started organizing there, only two or three Negroes worked in the entire St. Louis dress industry. During World War II, however, St. Louis garment shops began hiring Negroes in large numbers, but in segregated shops and floors. A number of companies expanding their operations hired all-Negro staffs for their new branches.

Because of deep-seated prejudices and misunderstandings, a special ILGWU local was chartered for these new workers. It was also felt that this would give the members a chance to develop the leadership and assurance they would need later on.

But it was far from smooth sailing, even within the union. One of the St. Louis joint boards refused to accept delegates from the new local. But they were seated immediately by the other joint board, and union leaders of both races began working together for better understanding and unity among the workers. Slowly, as the members cooperated on union committees, and got to know one another at larger meetings, as they joined together in discussions, classes and other educational projects, friendship and understanding grew.

In 1949 integration of both shops and union locals got under way. The segregated local was abolished and many of its officers took posts on the expanded executive and joint boards. Today most of the organized shops in the St. Louis area are non-segregated—a tribute to the patience and hard work of all the officers and members of the ILGWU.