

Executive Committee of The Committee on Women in Industry

OCT 14 A.M.

TO THE

MEMBERS AND SUBSCRIBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON WOMEN IN INDUSTRY

OCTOBER 1918.

HISTORY.

Purpose- The Committee on Women in Industry of the Council of National Defense, with Mrs. Borden Harriman, Chairman, was appointed by Mr. Samuel Gompers of the Committee on Labor

v(1) to advise on means for safeguarding the health and welfare of women workers during the war;

(2) to serve as a national center for co-ordinating the efforts of existing organizations for the improvement of the conditions of women's employment, and through investigation.

(3) to recommend methods of increasing the efficiency of women's work as an important factor in the successful conduct of the war.

Organization- The first meeting was held on May 4, 1917. At this meeting it was voted that an executive committee of seven members be appointed by the Chair, hereafter to be added to at the discretion of the Committee and that a secretary and treasurer should appear within its number. On this committee of seven, three trades union women should be included. The Executive Committee was finally expanded to include 15 members.

Finances. In October 1917, the Council of National Defense provided quarters and clerical help for the Committee on Women in Industry. All other funds to meet the expenses of an executive staff, of investigations and of publications were raised by private subscriptions from persons interested in the purpose of the organization. The Chairman launched a financial campaign and a total sum of \$8198.75 was raised by September 30, 1918.

Chairman Abroad. For four months, during the winter of 1917-1918 the Chairman was abroad and visited a variety of munitions works employing women in new occupations both in England and France. Every opportunity for visiting the works were accorded her by the officials. Mrs. Harriman's observations on the care of women in the plants were sent to the members of the Executive Committee and are suggestive of the improvements in the physical care of women needed here in similar industries.

Membership. The Committee has now been in existence one year and five months. It has a membership of 105 members of which about one-third are members of labor organizations. The Executive Committee consists of fifteen members-including five officers-chairman, vice-chairmen, treasurer, secretary, and executive secretary-and the chairmen of four standing committees on Industrial Standards, on Foreign Born Women, on Living Conditions and on Colored Women.

Standards. The first work of the Committee was the establishment of a set of standards for the employment of women at work on war supplies which was printed and issued in February, 1918.

Investigations. In November, 1917, Miss Amy Hewes was appointed executive secretary to make investigations of the conditions of women's employment in Government plants. Four investigations were made by Miss Hewes.

PLAN OUTLINED AT GENERAL MEETING HELD IN MARCH 1918.

The sense of this general meeting was that publicity should be secured for the reports made by the Committee and that some effective means should be devised for getting the Committee's recommendations put into effect.

A motion was made that a committee be appointed to formulate a plan whereby publicity might be secured for the reports.

The three months' program adopted by the Committee in April was therefore three fold.

1. To secure authorization from the department for which the study was made, to publish the reports:

2. To secure action on the recommendations of the Committee:

3. To make further studies of the conditions of women's employment in some of the newest war industries.

FIRST REPORTS.

Four reports were made for the Committee by Miss Amy Hewes, Executive Secretary, November, 1917- March 1918.

1. The Manufacture of Army Shirts under the Home Work System in Jeffersonville, Indiana.

2. The Employment of Women in the Clothing Factories of the Charleston Navy Yard;

3. Employment of Women at the Picatinny Arsenal;

4. Employment of Women at the Frankford Arsenal;

Two investigations were made by the New York State Committee for the Committee on Women in Industry during this period and submitted under the titles:

1. Women Workers at the Brooklyn Navy Yard.

2. The Manufacture of Naval Garments at the Brooklyn Navy Yard.

In accordance with the action taken at the last general meeting, May Allinson, Executive Secretary, April to September 1918, made subsequent visits to the Jeffersonville Depot, to the Charleston Navy Yard and to the Brooklyn Navy Yard to bring up-to-date the facts contained in the reports.

RESULTS OF INVESTIGATIONS.

The Jeffersonville Reports. The Report on the Manufacture of Army Shirts under the Home Work System, Jeffersonville, Indiana was presented to Dr. E. M. Hopkins, Assistant to the Secretary of War in charge of Industrial Relations; Dr. William Z. Ripley, Administrator of Labor Standards for Army Clothing and to Dr. N. I. Stone, in charge of the Cost Studies Section of the Quartermaster's Department. Dr. Stone presented a four-page memorandum to Mr. E. B. Tim in charge of the Light Goods Section, Clothing and Equipage Division, Office of the Quartermaster General, who awards the contracts for making the shirts, summarizing the main points and emphasizing the recommendations. The Committee has recently received an official statement that two thirds of the army shirts are now made on factories under the supervision of the Board of Administration of Labor Standards and hereafter the chief recommendation of the report- i.e. - the abolition of home work on army shirts- is to be carried out as rapidly as practicable.

The Charleston Report. The report on the Employment of Women in the Clothing Factories of the Charleston Navy Yard has been officially approved for publication by the Navy Department. The Department has acted favorably on the chief recommendations of this report. It has made the changes suggested in the factories such as improved sanitary conditions, abolition of the rating system and raising the wage scale. The Committee also recommended that the Navy Yard factory now located seven miles north of the City, should be moved into Charleston. The Bureau of Supplies and Accounts has been authorized and to acquire ground and to build a new factory within the city of Charleston. This will solve the very difficult housing and transportation problems described in the report. There is also prospect of an improvement in living conditions as the Department of Labor, through its Housing Commission, plans to build some houses for the workers employed by the Navy.

The Picatinny and Frankford Reports- The reports on the Picatinny and Frankford Arsenals were submitted to Miss Van Kleeck when she was appointed Chief of the Women's Division of the Industrial Service Section in the Ordnance Department. On July 10th she reported that the Picatinny Arsenal was no longer being used as a manufacturing establishment; that it is now a storehouse and that only about 30 women are employed there.

The Women's Division of the Industrial Service Section of the Ordnance Department reports that a number of the recommendations of the Committee's report have been carried out in the Frankford Arsenal. Two women are now in charge of the employment and placement of women workers; a nurse is in charge of the first aid and equipment, and a canteen has recently been installed.

NEW INVESTIGATIONS AND REPORTS.

Five investigations of women's work were made for the Committee by May Allinson, Executive Secretary, April to September, 1918, and are now in preparation or ready for the press;

1. Making the Uniforms for our Navy (Brooklyn);
(In press)
2. Women Workers in the Philadelphia Naval Aircraft Factory
(In press)
3. Substitution of Women in Aircraft Production (Curtiss
Factory, Buffalo.)
(Submitted to the Officer in Charge.)
4. Women Balloon and Gas Mask Makers (Long Island City,
and Akron, Ohio)
(Submitted to the Officer in charge)
5. Women Industrial Workers in the Navy Yards- Making
Life Preservers, Flags, Mattresses and Primers;
(Brooklyn, Philadelphia, Washington and New Port.)
(Final report in preparation.)

The first and fifth reports incorporate the facts contained in the reports of the investigations made by the New York State Committee of Women in Industry and give due recognition to that Committee for its work.

The Officers in Charge and the Departments concerned have shown great interest in the investigations and a surprising willingness to take suggestions and to carry out as many of the recommendations as possible. In the Philadelphia Naval Aircraft Factory, for instance, the Employment and Personnel Department twice asked for a dispensary and nurses in the factory and had been refused. When the report was presented to the Naval Department pointing out the need for this service, the request was granted immediately and the equipment installed within the same month.

The reports of these investigations will be distributed to the members of the Committee as soon as printed. Members will be notified of what ever official action is taken by the Government departments on the recommendations contained in each of the new reports.

FINANCES.

This concludes the program of work planned in April by the Committee and leaves a small sum in the treasury which the Executive Committee has voted to set aside as a publication fund to print the reports made by the Committee.

NEW GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS.

Many new divisions have recently been created within the Government to look after the interests of the workers. Some of these departments have created women's divisions and some have appointed women in executive positions to represent and to look after the interests of women workers. The following list of new divisions or executives indicates to what extent women's work has recently been recognized as an important industrial factor.

WOMEN'S DIVISIONS.

Women's Division, Industrial Service Section- Ordnance Department.
Women in Industry Service- U. S. Department of Labor.
Women's Section- U. S. Employment Service.
Women's Service Section- U. S. Railroad Administration.

WOMEN EXECUTIVES.

War Labor Board.
War Labor Policies Board- U. S. Department of Labor.
Investigation and Inspection Service- U. S. Department of Labor.
Working Condition Service- U. S. Department of Labor;
U. S. Housing Commission- U. S. Department of Labor.
Training and Dilution Service- U. S. Department of Labor.
Division of Information and Education- U. S. Department of Labor.

It is clear that these new agencies will perform in large part the functions which have been performed by the Committee on Women in Industry.

EXECUTIVE STAFF.

Mrs. Harriman, Chairman, sails in September for France in charge of the Red Cross Women's Overseas Ambulance Service.

Miss Agnes Bradford, who has been Office Secretary for the Committee almost from the beginning goes with Mrs. Harriman as her secretary.

May Allinson, Executive Secretary, goes on the staff of the Women in Industry Service of the U. S. Department of Labor.

PRESENT STATUS OF THE COMMITTEE.

The Committee now stands in the present position:

- (1) It has rounded up the program formulated by the Executive in April and can see definite results of its work and concrete action being taken upon its recommendations.
- (2) It has expended the finances collected for its investigations and publications with the exception of a fund voted to be set aside for publishing the reports.
- (3) New services in the Government are now taking over many of the functions of the Committee.

FUTURE STATUS OF THE COMMITTEE.

The Committee will remain intact as a part of Mr. Gompers' General Committee on Labor. Our Executive Committee at its last meeting, Tuesday, September 10th, 1918 voted that since the circumstances were as above described, the Committee, when it has finished the work it now has on hand and has published its reports, should hold itself ready to answer any call for service.

It was also voted that the membership of the Executive Committee should remain the same and that a local vice-chairman should be appointed to keep the Committee in touch with the changing situation, and to call upon it for further activities whenever the occasion requires.

The Committee will retain its present office in charge of an office secretary who shall have charge of the distribution of the publications, correspondence and matters which should come before the Committee.

It was pointed out at the Executive Meeting that occasions may arise needing the help of an outside, semi-official and representative group of women, such as our committee, and we should be available and ready to respond to the call. Such a group, representative of different parts of the country, as well as of many different interests, and unhampered by official restrictions and methods of procedure, can perform certain kinds of service which are not covered by strictly Government agencies. The Executive Committee believes that such an agency should be available and on call whenever needed.

The above arrangement, it is believed, is elastic enough to meet the present situation as well as whatever future occasion may arise.

CONNECTION WITH STATE COMMITTEES.

The Chairmen of our state committees have in the past conferred with and reported on their local problems at the general meetings of the Committee on Women in Industry. They have furthermore carried on inquiries within their own territory at the request of our Committee. An example of this was the investigations made by the New York State Committee into the conditions of women's work for the Brooklyn Navy Yard. Similarly, Illinois and Ohio have co-operated with our Committee and turned in reports on local conditions.

Last winter this Committee framed an outline of work to be carried on by the state committees calling for reports to be submitted jointly to our Committee and to the Industrial Department of the Woman's Committee. These plans covered the gathering of facts on local conditions, reports on the enforcement of state labor laws and the upholding of present standards for women and children. The Woman's Committee had not accepted the plan when the Women in Industry Service of the U. S. Department of Labor was organized.

Since many of the questions relative to women in industry involve national issues and new official agencies have been created within the United States Government to deal with them, the Committee on Women in Industry believes that the local and state committees should now report directly to the particular federal women's service concerned and appeal to it whenever necessary to bring about a readjustment of industrial conditions in their community.

The Executive Committee wishes to extend to all members and subscribers our sincere thanks and appreciation for their generous support and co-operation during the past 17 months in which we have worked together to promote the interests of woman workers.

Florence J. Harriman, Chairman,
Pauline Goldmark, Secretary,
May Allinson, Executive Secretary.

July 10, 1918

MINUTES
OF THE
MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
COMMITTEE ON WOMEN IN INDUSTRY

The Executive Committee of the Committee on Women in Industry convened in session at 10 A. M. Wednesday, July 10th, 1918, at the headquarters of the Committee, Room 111 $\frac{1}{2}$ Council of National Defense Bldg., Washington, D. C., Mrs. Borden Harriman, Chairman, presiding. Others present were: Miss Mary Anderson; Miss Melinda Scott; Miss Grace Abbott; Mrs. Frances C. Axtell; Miss Mary Van Kleeck; Miss May Allinson and Miss Agnes Bradford.

The minutes of the last meeting were read and approved.

The report of the treasurer, showing expenditures of \$440.97, and a balance on hand July 1st, 1918 of \$2500.89, was read and approved.

Upon motion of Mrs. Axtell, duly seconded, it was voted that the chairman be authorized in the absence of the treasurer to sign checks against the funds of the Committee in payment of bills authorized by the Budget Committee.

Upon motion of Miss Anderson, duly seconded, it was voted that Mrs. Axtell be requested to serve as a member of the Budget Committee and authorized to sign schedules of bills.

The executive secretary stated that she had visited the Clothing Factories at the Charleston Navy Yard and the Quartermaster's Depot at Jeffersonville, Indiana, to ascertain if changes had been made in the conditions of women's employment since the previous investigations, and to see how far the recommendations contained in the reports had been carried out.

She reported the following changes in the Charleston Clothing Factories:

The minimum rate of pay has been advanced from \$1.60 to \$2.00 for both the white and colored workers;

The sanitary conditions in the factory employing white women have been greatly improved; additional ventilators

in the roof and bubble fountains have been installed. A new building to be fully equipped with lunch and rest rooms and adequate sanitary provisions adjoining the factory employing colored women is now in course of construction.

The factory employing white women is running on a 58 hour week and the colored factory on a 48 hour week. It is planned, however, to place the latter factory on a double shift basis in the immediate future.

A wholly new personnel is in charge at the Jeffersonville Depot. The inspection force has been increased to 25 under the supervision of a new doctor who is making every effort to improve health conditions.

Two bundles of shirts a week in place of only one are now allowed each woman worker.

Women are now being employed in two new lines of work - packing in the storehouses and driving the Depot cars. About 150 colored women were employed in the former occupation at the time of the visit.

Sanitary provisions for the workers in the Jeffersonville Clothing Factory have been greatly improved, and the officers in charge of the Louisville Substation report that the work has been taken away from the women living in the most unsanitary homes described in the former report.

Upon motion of Miss Abbott, duly seconded, it was voted that the Jeffersonville and Charleston reports be printed as brought up to date in the name of the Committee and that the Chairman prepare an introductory statement setting forth by whom the investigations were made and that the reports be referred to a committee for approval.

The chairman appointed Miss Abbott, Miss Anderson, and Miss Allinson as a committee to consider the reports.

Miss Anderson stated that the Picatinny Arsenal on which Miss Hewes made a report early in the year, was no

longer a manufacturing establishment; that it was being used as a storehouse and that no women, with the exception of about thirty clerks, were employed there.

It was agreed that the Picatinny report should therefore not be published.

Upon motion of Miss Anderson, duly seconded, it was voted that the New Jersey Committee be notified of the changes made by the Ordnance Department at the Picatinny Arsenal.

It was agreed that Miss Kingsbury be advised that her request for permission to use the material contained in the report on the Schuylkill Arsenal should be referred to Mr. Hopkins of the Quartermaster's office.

The Chairman reported that several conferences had been held with the Department of Women in Industry of the Woman's Committee regarding the matter of co-operation between the two committees and that, as a result of these conferences, the following program for state committees had been agreed upon:

"I. GATHERING OF FACTS

1. Factory Inspection and Enforcement of Labor Laws.

It is most important to determine whether the efficiency of these departments has increased or decreased during war times. For this purpose reports are desired on the number of yearly inspections of factories and mercantile establishments; the number of yearly prosecutions and convictions for illegal employment of women and children. State in each case whether increased or decreased during the past year. Give number of men and women inspectors and whether more are needed and if there is prospect of increasing number of next legislature, etc. Give total budget for enforcement of labor laws provided from state funds.

Reports are desired on any changes in the labor laws since the beginning of the war and whether resulting in breakdown or improvement of previous standards.

2. Number of Women and Children Employed.

Give number of women and children respectively employed in factories and mercantile establishments and other occupations. Give the total figure for 1916 and 1917 to show increase or decrease. Get official figures as far as possible.

3. New Occupations for Women.

Give description of work now being done by women formerly performed by men, such as messenger, elevator or street-car service, stating number employed; hours of work; wages, the suitability of the occupations and special risks, if any, and reasons for employing women. Is there need for further legislation?

4. Employment of Married Women with Young Children.

It is important to note the increase in the employment of mothers with young children, whether they work at night and the effects on general family welfare. Give occupations and number as far as possible.

5. Night Work.

In what occupations are women employed at night? Numbers so employed: What are the hours of labor and any general facts on amount of sleep by day and effect on health.

2. MEASURING UP THE STATE STANDARDS.

The State Committees are asked to measure up the standards maintained in their state either by law, custom, or trade unions, with those recommended by the Government.

These recommendations have been accepted by both committees,

The Chief of Ordnance in General Orders No. 13 and the Quartermaster General in Circular No. 18 have issued practically duplicate suggestions to Arsenal Commanders, Depot Quartermasters, and to manufacturers on Government contracts for the War Department recommending standards on:

1. Hours of Labor;
2. Standards in Work Rooms;
3. Wages;
4. Negotiations between Employer and Employee;
5. Standards for Employment of Women;
6. Standards for Employment of Minors.

Additional copies of General Orders No. 13, Office of the Chief of Ordnance, Circular No. 18, Office of the Quartermaster General and Standards submitted by the Committee on Women in Industry can be secured from the office of either committee."

Miss Allinson reported that she had completed her investigations of women's employment in the Philadelphia Naval Aircraft Factory, the Curtiss Airplane Factory and of the factory production of naval uniforms in connection with the Brooklyn Navy Yard and that the reports were ready for publication. She also stated that a report on the Gas Mask Factory at Long Island was nearing completion.

Upon motion duly seconded, it was voted that these reports be submitted to the Committee on Publication for approval.

The Chairman read a letter from Miss McDowell, Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Born Women asking for an appropriation with which to print 3000 additional copies of the Americanization Program of the Committee on Foreign Born Women, the matter of printing to be handled by the Young Women's Christian Association. Upon motion duly seconded, it was voted that \$100.00 be appropriated out of the funds of the Committee for the work of the Committee on Foreign Born Women.

The Chairman also read a resolution passed by the Council of National Defense regarding their work of Americanization to be carried on through the State Councils of Defense. It was agreed that the Chairman be

requested to confer with Mr, Gifford, Director of the Council of National Defense, in regard to the Committee on Foreign Born Women's program in order to avoid duplication or overlapping in the work of Americanization.

A letter from Miss Breckinridge, Chairman of the Committee on Colored Women, enclosing a report of the work done by Mrs. Goins was read. She reported that she had visited a number of establishments where colored women are employed, held general meetings and had made comparison of conditions before and since the decision of Judge Alschuler and had found a very marked improvement.

Upon motion of Miss Van Kleeck, duly seconded, it was voted that the Chairman be requested to work out a plan of arousing public sentiment in favor of retaining the new building of the Manhattan Trade School for its original use.

Upon motion, duly seconded, it was voted that the Chairman be requested to ask the Secretary of Labor for a decision as to what the future status of this committee and the whole Committee on Labor is to be.

It was agreed that the chairman be requested to confer with Capt. Dickinson of the Ordnance Department in regard to women war speakers in industrial centers and to discuss the possibility of a plan of co-operation.

Meeting adjourned.