

Grand Rapids, Mich

October 29, 1918.

Miss Charlotte Hine, Woman's Branch
Industrial Service Section, Ordnance Department,
Book Building, Detroit, Michigan.

My dear Miss Hine:

I am very sorry that I have delayed so long in acknowledging your report on conditions in Grand Rapids, Michigan. We are very grateful to you for sending us this information which is useful in comparison with conditions in other communities.

With appreciation of the careful piece of work which you have done and with best wishes to you,

Sincerely yours,

MVK/ALL

Mary Van Klesck, Director
Director, Woman in Industry Service.

COERCION OF LABOR IN DETROIT CHARGED

Federation, in Appeal for War
Board Inquiry, Says Employ-
ers' Methods Are Interfering
With Fourth Liberty Loan

Oct 5 ————— 1918

Special to The Christian Science Monitor

from its Western Bureau

DETROIT, Mich.—Such coercion as to seriously interfere with the fourth Liberty Loan is one of the specific charges placed at the door of the Detroit Employers Association and individual industries by the Detroit Federation of Labor in its appeal to the War Labor Board for a general investigation of labor conditions in this city.

Coercion of labor by the draft, forced subscriptions to the Detroit patriotic fund, and general violation of the labor ideals laid down by the War Labor Board, are charged in the formal complaint, which includes 13 specific charges.

The petition of the laborers also asks immediate investigation, and the board assured the committee that the charges will be gone into fully. As a result, extended hearings will probably be held here by a section of the War Labor Board.

The alleged violators are named on only two counts. A long list of industries is given which are said to have discriminated against men because of their affiliation with labor unions. The most of the charges seem to be aimed at this point of friction, and industrial leaders claim that the primary aim of the petition to Washington is to force a fuller measure of union recognition. Ten of the largest munitions plants are listed as violators of the eight-hour law.

The petition recites that plants have advertised that employment there insured deferred classification and that men have been forced to work for low wages under the threat of being forced into the army.

The recital says that general conditions are "menacing the industrial welfare of the city" and "are sure to result in acute industrial unrest."

The petition also charges that "the conditions have grown out of a conspiracy among employers federated into the Detroit Employers Association, members of which have banded themselves together to turn war conditions to their selfish interests."

The methods of selling Liberty bonds, war savings stamps and securing subscriptions to the Detroit patriotic fund are dwelt on at length. It is asserted that workmen have been compelled to subscribe from their wages and that when a man leaves, for any reason, the entire amount of wages due has been applied on his subscription.

"Large Detroit corporations," says the complaint, "have subscribed a quota of the patriotic funds and proceeded to apportion the share of each employee pro rata. To accomplish this, many employers use coercive methods, forcing workmen to contribute to a degree which on numerous occasions caused hardship to the worker's family.

"In case of a discharge or lay-off the full amount due on these pledges is deducted from the pay of a particular week, leaving the men insufficient money to provide themselves and their families with the indispensable necessities of life."

The list of specific charges follows: Collusive discrimination against organized workers; boycott of employers who hire union men; evasion of the federal eight-hour law; refusal of shipbuilding companies to abide by the Macy award; refusal to meet shop conditions of the War Labor Board; use of bonus systems to defeat purposes of labor awards; systematic imposition of excessive overtime not necessary; failure to advance wages to meet increased living costs; manipulation of the deferred draft classifications and promises of military exemption in order to obtain workers at less than fair wages; conspiracy of Detroit Employers Association to prevent collective bargaining; substitution of women workers for men at lower wages; hostile and defiant attitude of employers and complete domination of patriotic activities by employers and use of undue and unnecessary coercion and unfair methods in the sale of Liberty bonds, war savings stamps and in subscriptions to various war funds, with the result of dampening the workers' patriotic desire to help in these activities and with the inevitable effect of interfering seriously with the fourth Liberty Loan.

Trumbitch, president of the Jugo-Slav committee, having sent a congratulatory telegram to the Serbian Government, has received the following reply, communicated to L'Homme Libre by the Serbian legation.

"The Royal Serbian Government appreciates the fraternal felicitations of the Jugo-Slav committee, for the magnificent successes of the valiant Serbian Army, fraternally and heroically supported by the Jugo-Slav troops. We must, however, regret, as you do, that they have not yet been able to take a more intense part in this titanic struggle for the liberation and unity of all the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, who together, and in common agreement, created and solemnly proclaimed the basis of their future independent state in the Corfu declaration.

"The Serbian Government is awaiting the unanimous and solemn recognition of our future state on the part of our great allies and friends in order that our common action should become juridical and that the international status of the future kingdom and of the united people be recognized. Let us hope that soon the Sokols of Triglav and the Vardar, of the Adriatic Sea and of the Aegean, will have their efforts crowned with the recognition they deserve.

"With the collaboration of our allies, and eight days after the capture of Vetrenik, our armies entered the town of Kralkovitchmarko, and reached beyond Babuna, the native land of our heroic Sokol, Babunski. One more effort, and they will, by the grace of God, have freed all Macedonia and old Serbia."

Bulgaria's Debts

ZURICH, Switzerland (Friday)—The defection of Bulgaria is having a serious financial effect on the Central Empires, since both Germany and Austria-Hungary had made large advances to Bulgaria for the conduct of the military operations.

According to the Vienna Neue Freie Presse the first loan was for 250,000,000 francs, made in August, 1915, immediately before Bulgaria's entrance into the war. Another loan of 500,000,000 francs was made in 1916. There were two other advances in 1916 and 1917, carrying the total above 1,000,000,000 francs. In addition to money, the Central Powers delivered large quantities of war matériel to Bulgaria.

The German loans are guaranteed by receipts for imports, but the Austrian loans are secured only by paper.

Constantinople Next

SALONIKA, Greece (Friday)—"We will soon direct our blow at Constantinople, and the vanquished Turk will be thrown once and for all into Asia," declared General Franchet d'Esperey, the allied commander-in-chief on the Macedonian front, in replying to a demonstration today.

The allied commander said that the beginning made would be continued.

The carrying out of the clauses of the armistice between Bulgaria and the Allies began on Wednesday.

The population of Salonika today held an enthusiastic meeting at the Place Tour Blanche. Resolutions of thanks addressed to General d'Esperey and Mr. Venizelos were adopted.

Mr. Venizelos said that the victory just completed by the military convention, by which Bulgaria recognized her complete defeat, would exercise a great influence upon the issues of the world war. The defeat of Bulgaria definitely removed the danger of Bulgarian supremacy in the Balkans and assured a peace of liberty he said.

"We rejoice at the resurrection of Serbia," he continued. "We do not know the date of the end of this gigantic war, but we are absolutely sure of complete victory and ready for every sacrifice."

Victor Receives Medal

Special cable to The Christian Science Monitor from its European Bureau

PARIS, France (Thursday)—Division General Meinier is appointed Military Governor of Paris in succession to General Guillaumet, who has been appointed to another post. General Guillaumet has been awarded the military medal, the official announcement stating that, as commander-in-chief of the allied armies in the East he worked out with remarkable comprehension of the situation the plan of the offensive, the execution of which rapidly compelled the Bulgarians to ask for an armistice.

General Franchet d'Esperey also receives the military medal, the official announcement carrying a com-

WAR DEPARTMENT
DETROIT DISTRICT ORDNANCE OFFICE
INDUSTRIAL SERVICE SECTION
BOOK BUILDING

SEP 27 P.M.

Sept. 25th, 1918.
DETROIT, MICH.,

Anderson

From: Miss Charlotte Hine, Women's Branch, Industrial Service Section.
To: Miss Mary Van Kleeck, Women in Industry Service, Department of Labor, Washington, D.C.
Subject: REPORT ON CONDITIONS IN GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN.

My dear Miss Van Kleeck:-

1. Complying with Miss Anderson's request of August 6th, for additional information in regard to wages and hours of work in Grand Rapids, I wish to submit my report, which is based on conferences with the following people:

Miss Watkins - U. S. Employment Service
for Women.
Mr. R. Peterson - Business Agent of the
Carpenters' Union.
Mr. Bert Slott - Secretary of the Trade
and Labor Council.
Mrs. C. O. Taylor - Chairman of the Women's
Trade Union League.
Mr. C. O. Taylor - Editor of "The Observer",
the labor paper in Grand
Rapids.
Mr. P. B. Merrick - President of the Social
Welfare League, and Di-
rector of the Red Cross
Civilian Relief.
Mr. Bierce - Secretary of the Board of Commerce.
Miss Hurry - Employment Department, Y.W.C.A.

WAGE RATES.

According to figures prepared by the U.S. Employment Service for men, the hourly rate paid to men compares very favorably with rates paid in other sections of the State, with the exception of Detroit. Compared to Detroit rates are approximately 10% lower. This is more than off-set by the difference in the cost of living in the two cities. (See Appendix I)

The 1918 report of the State Department of Labor is not yet available for Grand Rapids and the 1917 report gives data applicable only to 1916, which is decidedly out of date for present usage. Manufacturers in Grand Rapids have estimated

Sept. 25th, 1918.

increases in the wage rates of the leading industries varying from 8% to 30% for 1917. (See Appendices II, III and IV)

Women's rates are low. The average hourly rate for those employed in the wood-working industry is 21¢, as given in the chart prepared by the Manufacturers Association, representing these industries, though the greatest number of women are receiving only 19¢ an hour. (See Appendix V)

For Grand Rapids, as a whole, the average daily wage is \$1.98. For women over 16 years of age in factories, it averages \$1.45. (See Appendix II)

Wages in Grand Rapids are lower than in Detroit, but compare favorably with the remaining cities. In fact Grand Rapids and Saginaw have the same average daily wage.

COST OF LIVING.

I had great difficulty in securing any accurate and reliable figures for the cost of living in Grand Rapids, which would permit of a study of wages paid in relation to living expense and of a comparison between cities. The tables obtained were compiled for the Social Welfare Association in 1917 and are admittedly too low an estimate for self-supporting workmen with families. They also pre-suppose a full working year with steady work.

By comparing Appendix III and VI, we can detect the discrepancy between wages earned and the cost of living. To maintain Standard of Living-B, for two adults and three children, it is necessary to earn at least \$3.09 a day. This would be possible only for skilled workers in foundries or printing shops. The unskilled fall far short of the essential daily wage, as do those workers with larger families.

Women cannot obtain suitable room and board for less than \$7.00 per week. The prevailing wage rate, of \$10.00 a week, allows a very inadequate margin for other expenses.

A very hopeful feeling prevails among the people interviewed, as to the future conditions in Grand Rapids. Several of the plants have made effective the ruling of equal pay for equal work and others are adopting a weekly minimum of \$15.00 for women with piece work rates after proving proficient on the assigned work. This has had

#3
Report on Grand Rapids.

Sept. 25th, 1918.

the effect of raising the standard of wages in general and other manufacturers find that they must revise their wage scale to meet the competition and to hold their employes. The wide range of rates paid in Grand Rapids has created an unfortunate condition of floating among the women workers. This can only be remedied by standardization of rates paid.

Manufacturers and Representatives of Labor agree that living in Grand Rapids costs considerably less than in Detroit, especially in the item of rent. Most of the workers have easy access to their homes and large numbers of them live within walking distance.

HOURS OF WORK.

In only one plant, that is the Metal Parts Company, are they operating ten hours per day, which is permissible according to the Michigan State Law. Most of the firms work nine hours per day, six days a week. A few are running two and three 8 hour shifts. This applies especially to those plants which are not manufacturing an open market commodity. The manufacturers have already sent a Representative to Washington to secure an interpretation of the Eight Hour Basic Day with time and one-half for overtime, and its application to their plants. It is their intention to abide by any decision rendered by the authorities in Washington.

The erection of a Picric Acid plant in Grand Rapids on which all demands of the Carpenters' Union as to wages, hours of work and time and one-half for overtime, -over eight hours-has been met, with the exception of double time for Sunday, has helped raise the wage rate throughout the city. It has also resulted in the return of many workmen, who had left the city to secure work elsewhere at the entrance of the United States into the War, especially since the families of these men had remained in Grand Rapids. This city had been over-supplied with labor and had, therefore, been a natural recruiting place for other cities, but this is adjusting itself to meet present conditions.

Very truly yours,

Charlotte Hine

CHARLOTTE HINE,
Supervisor, Women's Branch,
Industrial Service Section.

CH/BB

Sept. 25th, 18.

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Miss Mary Van Kleeck, Women in Industry Service, Department of
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Very truly yours,

CHARLOTTE HINE,
Supervisor, Women's Branch,
Industrial Service Section.

CH/BB

Appendix I.

WAGE RATES OF MEN IN GRAND RAPIDS.

U. S. EMPLOYMENT SERVICE.

on August 14th, 1918.

Die makers - 55¢ up.	Millwright Helpers - 35¢
Cabinetmakers - 32-50¢ hr.	Car Repair men - open
Cabinetmaker's helpers - 30¢	Upholsterers - 38¢ up
Tool Makers - 52¢ up	Packers - 27½-37¢
Rubbers - open	Brass Molders - \$5 up piece work
Fillers - open	Metal Patternmakers - 55¢
Gluers - 24½-35¢	Sanders @ 30-40¢
Lathe Operators - 35-50¢	Rip Sawyers - 30-35¢
A*1 Machinists - 50-55¢	Mitre Sawyers - 35-42¢
Punch Press Operators - 30-35¢	Shape Hands - 35-40¢
Hand Screw Mach. - 35¢ up	Trimmers - 35-40¢
Automatic Screw Mach. - 35¢ up	Leather workers - \$20-\$30 week.
Milling Mach. Operator - open	Sticker men - 40¢
Band Sawyer - 35¢ up	Double Cut off Sawyer - 35¢
Buzz Planers - open	Ex. Knitter - open
Stock Cutter - 40¢	Truckers - 29-30¢
Planer Men - 40¢	Laborers - 27-40¢
Hand Turner - 35-40¢	Molders - piece work
Planer Op. - 35-55¢	Boring Mach. Op. - 40¢
Grind Room Man - 35¢	Night Watchman - open
Wood Working Mach. Op. - open	Sheet Metal Workers - open
	Bench Assemblers - 40-50¢

Appendix II.

GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN.

FIGURES FOR 1917.

	# employed - Men -	Hours of Labor	Average Daily Wages	Aggregate Daily Wages
Superintendents	827	51.8	\$5.67	\$2192.74
Foremen	1108	52	4.16	4598.07
Boys under 16 years	99	52	1.31	129.32
Boys between 16 and 18.	559	54	1.56	874.62
Men over 18 years in office	1336	56	3.95	5185.25
Men over 18-skilled labor	10945	56.1	3.03	32132.98
Other over 18 years	8983	56	2.47	22155.39
	<u>23857</u>		<u>3.16</u>	<u>67268.37</u>

	# employed -Women-	Hours of Labor	Average Daily Wages	Aggregate Daily Wages
Superintendents	31	52.1	\$3.31	\$56.33
Foreladies	105	51	1.96	205.89
Girls under 16 years	44	50	1.18	50.54
Women over 16 in office	1094	54	2.03	2215.31
Other Women over 16	3748	54	1.45	5308.46
	<u>5022</u>		<u>1.98</u>	<u>7836.53</u>

AVERAGE WAGES IN FIVE LEADING INDUSTRIES
OF GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN.

Figures derived from the 1917 Report of the Michigan Department of Labor. This table excludes superintendents, foremen and office help and also excludes women and boys, Extract from the report of the Social Welfare Association.

Industry	Employed on Skilled Work .		Employed on Unskilled Work	
	Number of men over 18 years	Average wage	Number of men over 18 years	Average wage
Furniture ----	5027	\$2.29	2136	\$1.94
Foundries ----	261	3.20	242	2.06
Printing ----	470	3.00	105	1.94
Machinery ----	1396	2.78	469	2.23
Paper and Paper Box -----	127	2.77	254	2.42

PERCENTAGE OF INCREASE IN WAGES
IN GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN.

EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE SOCIAL WELFARE ASSOCIATION.

The following statements are given us by leading business men, acknowledged representatives of the industries named, as to the rise in wages in their respective industries during the year beginning May 1st, 1916, and ending April 30th, 1917:

1. - Furniture industry - general raises amounting to 14%.
2. - Foundries - advance in all classes of labor averaging about 20%.
3. - Printing - 15% in unorganized shops. The newspapers and other shops employing union labor hold to their 5 year contract which allows for an increase of about 8%.
4. - Machinery - 25 to 30% increase.
5. - Paper and Paper Boxes - 15% increase.

GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN.

Appendix V.

	# of women employed in wood- working plants.	Rate per hour.
Miscellaneous	25	.229
Common Labor	10	.198
Jointers	1	.31
Shapers	2	.20
Belt & Other Machines		
Sanders	4	.229
Boring Machines	6	.197
Other Machines	4	.229
Machine Room Help (Tenders & Helpers)	78	.208
Veneer Room	32	.210
Cabinet-makers	43	.199
" " Helpers	56	.210
Otyer Cabinet	144	.193
Fillers	16	.197
Stainers	9	.202
Sanders	104	.210
Shellacers	18	.197
Varnishers Brush	22	.206
Var. Spray	5	.20
Rubber & Polishers	29	.229
Other Fin. Room Help	7	.224
Trimmers	5	.19
Packers	14	.19
Other Packing Room Help	11	.195
Upholsterers	15	.224
Springing up	5	.182
Pad-makers	7	.225
Decorators	32	.282
Airplane Dept.	37	.196
Office	21	.301
Sewing Machine	11	.215
Blueprints	1	.23
	<u>774</u>	<u>.21</u>

.10 to .52 (Decorator)

Number of women at different rates.

304	@	19¢
91	@	22¢
1	@	31¢
116	@	20¢
5	@	18¢
21	@	30¢
32	@	28¢
203	@	21¢
1	@	23¢
<u>774</u>		

COST OF LIVING ON A MINIMUM BASIS IN GRAND RAPIDS
AND WAGE RATES ESSENTIAL TO THIS MINIMUM STANDARD.

FIGURES TAKEN FROM THE 1917 REPORT.

EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE SOCIAL WELFARE ASSOCIATION.

For family groups including

	Year	(I) 2 adults and 3 children	(II) 2 adults and 6 children
Standard of Living-A			
Cost of living, per month, on lowest standard that would maintain health. No allowance made for insurance, medical attention, recreation or savings.	1914	\$45.91	\$65.44
	1916	57.22	80.65
	1917	61.69	90.68

Minimum daily wage necessary to support family on Standard of Living-A, if working steadily through the year and counting 26 working days per month.	1914	1.76	2.52
	1916	2.20	3.10
	1917	2.37	3.49

Standard of Living-B

Cost of living, per month, on lowest standard, as above, but allowing for slight expenditures for doctors, insurance and recreation. (See itemized budget)	1917	80.35	114.41
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Minimum wage essential to maintain family on Standard of Living-B.	1917	3.09	4.40
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MINIMUM FAMILY BUDGETS IN GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN.

Cost of Living According to two Standards of Living-A and B.
For Group I - Two Adults and Three Children.

Items of Expenditure	Cost of Living Standard A			Cost of Living Standard B
	1914	1916	1917	1917
Food - - - - -	\$19.94	\$25.39	29.43	\$33.00
Rent - - - - -	7.77	8.42	8.50	8.50 (5 r)
Fuel - - - - -	2.70	2.91	3.26	3.26
Light - - - - -	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.50
Clothing - - - - -	10.00	15.00	15.00	15.00
Sundries - - - - -	4.00	4.00	4.00	.59 (ice)
Emergencies - - - - -				1.00
Household expenses and furnishings				3.00
Furniture, renewals of, and new purchases - - - - -				1.00
INSURANCE - B. Insurance (Burial) - - - - -				3.00
Car-fare - - - - -				2.50
Medical & Dental Care - - - - -				4.00
RECREATION - B. Recreation - - - - -				2.00
EDUCATION - B. Education - - - - -				2.00
Cost per month - - - - -	45.91	57.22	61.69	\$ 80.35
Daily Cost - - - - -	1.53	1.90	2.08	2.68
Daily wage necessary to this standard - 1.76	2.20	2.37		3.09

Item for rent is too low, as a suitable house for a workingman's family rents for at least \$15.00 per month, according to the most reliable information that I could obtain.

MINIMUM FAMILY BUDGETS IN GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN.

Cost of Living According to two Standards of Living -A and B.
For Group II - Two adults and six children.

Items of Expenditure	Cost of Living Standard A			.	.	.	Cost of Living Standard B
	1914	1916	1917				1917
Food - - - - -	\$29.01	\$35.55	\$45.04	.	.	.	\$48.55
Rent - - - - -	9.58	10.37	10.47	.	.	.	10.47(6 r)
Fuel - - - - -	3.60	3.48	3.92	.	.	.	3.92
Light- - - - -	1.75	1.75	1.75	.	.	.	1.75
Clothing - - - - -	16.00	24.00	24.00	.	.	.	24.00
Sundries - - - - -	5.50	5.50	5.5059(ice)
Household Expenses- - - - -				.	.	.	3.75
Furniture- - - - -				.	.	.	1.50
Insurance (Burial)- - - - -				.	.	.	4.50
B Car-fare - - - - -				.	.	.	2.50
SUNDRIES - Medical & Dental care - - - - -				.	.	.	5.88
Recreation - - - - -				.	.	.	2.80
Education - - - - -				.	.	.	2.80
Emergencies- - - - -				.	.	.	1.50
Cost per month - - - - -	\$65.44	\$80.65	\$90.68	.	.	.	\$114.51
Daily Cost - - - - -	2.18	2.69	3.02	.	.	.	3.81
Daily wage necessary to this standard	2.52	3.10	3.49	.	.	.	4.40

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WORKING HOURS IN FIRMS ENGAGED ON

WAR WORK
IN
GRAND RAPIDS.

Grand Rapids School Equipment Co.	- Truck Bodies	- 9 hrs. day
" "	Malleable Iron Co. - Auto parts	- 9 - 10 hrs. day
" "	Brass Company	- 9 hrs.
Wolverine Brass Company	- Gun Mounts	- 9 hrs.
Keeler Brass Company	- Gun Parts	- 9 hrs.
American Seating Company	- Parts of Bombs	- 8 hrs. - 2 shifts.
Grand Rapids Brush Company	- Hair Brushes	- 8 hrs. - 2 shifts
Flottorp Company	- Aero Propellers	- 8½ hrs.
Metal Parts Mfg. Company	-	- 10 hrs. - 55 hr. wk.
Swiss-American Company	- Underwear	- 9 hr. 50 min. - 54 hr. week.
Globe Knitting Works	- Underwear	- 9 hr.
Haskelite Company	- Aero Parts	- Three 8 hr. shifts.
Grand Rapids Airplane Company (Comprised of Departments in 20 factories)	-	- 9 hrs.