

HOME WORK

WOMAN IN INDUSTRY SERVICE

August 14, 1918.

My dear Miss de Lima:

We are referring your report on home work given out by the Trumbull Waster Manufacturing Company to the Gas Warfare Service with a request that they let us know whether an additional investigation is required or whether it may be possible for the contract departasnt at once to take action.

Sincerely yours,

Mary Van Kleeck,
Director, Women in Industry Service.

Miss Agnes de Lima,
Investigator,
National Consumers' League,
284 Fourth Avenue, New York City.

House Work

WOMAN IN INDUSTRY SERVICE

August 13, 1918.

My dear Major Rosensohn:

The report from Miss Agnes de Lima, investigator for the National Consumers' League, on the giving out of cotton waste to be made up into balls by the Trumbull Waste Manufacturing Company, as referred by you to this office, has been received, and we are taking the matter up at once with the Gas Warfare Service. We shall report results direct to Miss de Lima unless you prefer to have us send the report to your office.

Sincerely yours,

Mary Van Kleeck
Director, Woman in Industry Service.

Major Samuel B. Rosensohn,
Office of the Secretary of War,
Washington, D. C.

WOMAN IN INDUSTRY SERVICE

August 13, 1918.

My dear Captain Bradley:

The enclosed report has been referred to us from the office of the Secretary of War. It describes the manufacture in homes of balls of cotton waste which appear to be made up on contract for the Gas Warfare Service. In the standards of working conditions suggested in General Orders #13 issued by the Chief of Ordnance last November and in circular #18 issued by the Quartermaster General, it is stated that no manufacturing in connection with government contracts should be done in the homes, and if the facts as stated in the enclosed communication are correct, it would seem desirable to take steps to prevent the continuance of this practice, since it is contrary to the government standards and apparently dangerous to the public health. Miss Agnes de Lima, who writes the letter, is a responsible investigator for the National Consumers' League, of which the Secretary of War is President. Would it be

possible for you to take this matter up for us with the contract department? If an additional investigation is needed we shall be glad to request Miss de Lima to make it if you so desire. I am making this request of you because as a member of the Committee on Hazardous Occupations I hope that we may regard you as a connecting link between the Woman in Industry Service and the Gas Warfare Service.

Sincerely yours,

Mary Van Kleeck,
Director, Woman in Industry Service.

Captain H. C. Bradley,
Gas Warfare Service,
Medical Department Building,
7th and B Street,
Washington, D. C.

WOMEN IN INDUSTRY SERVICE

August 6, 1918.

My dear Miss de Lima:

Your report on the investigation conducted by you in the Trumbull Waste Manufacturing Company has been referred to Miss Van Kleeck, Director of the Women in Industry Service of the Labor Department. Miss Van Kleeck is out of the city at this time, and she will be back Friday morning. She will then be able to take this question up with Major Rosenschn.

Sincerely yours,

Assistant Director,
Women in Industry Service.

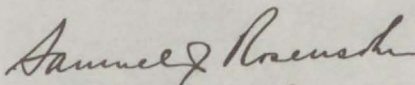
Miss Agnes de Lima,
National Consumers' League,
289 Fourth Avenue,
New York City.

WAR DEPARTMENT,
WASHINGTON.

July 30, 1918.

MEMORANDUM for Miss Van Kleeck, Div. of Women in Industry,
War Labor Policies Board.

1. Attached please find a letter from Miss Agnes De Lima, Investigator, National Consumers' League, for your attention.
2. I am sending under separate cover a box of cotton waste which was submitted with the letter.



Samuel J. Rosensohn
Major, J.A.G., R.C., detailed to the
Office of the Secretary of War.

COPY

Home Work

National Consumers' League

New York City

July 25, 1918

Major Samuel J. Rosenbhn
Room 490
War Department
Washington, D C.

Dear Sir:

Miss Pauline Goldmerk has told me that you are anxious to have additional information regarding the home work given out by the Trumbull Waste Manufacturing Company, 102 Leverington Avenue, Manayunk, Philadelphia, and I am sure you will be interested in the recent facts which we have discovered.

On June 26th, a visit was made to the Trumbull Waste Mfg. Co. in the course of the study which we are making of the use of women in the shoddy and waste industries. At that time we discovered that the concern does not use any women on the premises, and employed only 20 men, but that they were giving out to about 100 women in their homes bales of cotton waste to be tied into balls. The concern delivering the bales to the homes and calling for the finished balls. The balls were said to be intended for some sort of air bomb purpose and the workers were appealed to do the work on a patriotic basis, although they were paid 1/2 cent a ball.

A second visit was made on July 1st with the request that the list of homeworkers be supplied, because it was our feeling that work of this sort might not be suitable to be carried on in homes without adequate supervision, both as regards sanitary conditions and the possibility of the waste being tampered with. Mr. Trumbull, the President, refused to give out the names, stating it was hard to get people to do the work, and that he did not want them interfered with.

We persisted however in our efforts to find out more about this work and finally discovered that it was being supervised by Mr. C.H. Moorhouse, a young Baptist minister of the Manatawna Church, who has not yet completed his theological course and is making some additional money this way.

Yesterday Mr. Moorhouse and Mr. R.R. Bilter, Secretary of the Trumbull Waste Mfg. Co. called at this office and gave us the following information: They had secured a contract from the Edgewood Arsenal Branch of the Ordnance Dept. on June 11th for compleing 1,000,000 balls of cotton waste. The number of the order is - "War Order No. 1323, GPR, Work Order 82-3 ; Form of contract, F.P."

Mr. Bilter stated that Dr. Richter of the American University Experiment Station at Washington, D.C. had first experimented with the waste material submitted by the Trumbull Waste Mfg. Co. Mr. Bilter stated that he did not know the exact purpose for which the balls were intended, but he imagined they were for air bombs or hand grenades. They have to be made of material which will hold 10 oz. of raw wood turpentine after being soaked for ten minutes. The balls have to weigh not less than two nor more than three oz. The waste material he claims is of the finest stock of clippings. Mr. Moorhouse has furnished me with samples and I am forwarding them to you under separate cover, including a

a ball already tied up, and some of the loose waste and string used to tie it.

They are just completing the last of the contract now and every one of the million balls has been made in homes. The names were first secured by a house to house canvass, but later Mr. Moorhouse said he was overwhelmed with applications for work. Altogether about 300 different homes took part in the work but not more than 75 at a time. Mr. Moorhouse claimed that they were very particular about the type of homes in which the waste was allowed to go. None of it was placed in the lower part of Manayunk, the congested section where the population is largely foreign. All of it was sent to homes in the upper part of the ward, known as Roxborough and Manatawna. He stated that children could not do the work as the string has to be wound around three times and tied very tightly. He said he was very particular about the way the work was done and visited the homes two or three times a week, examining the balls at random in the bags after they were ready for delivery to be sure they were up to standard. If they were not, the work was taken away from the home.

Mr. Bilter said that the Trumbull Waste Mfg. Co. is expecting to get another contract for making jute balls for the Gas Offensive Unit under the Chemical Warfare Branch, and that he expects to use these same women for this work. He does not know whether they will get another order for cotton waste balls. He said he did not know of any other concerns getting similar contracts, nor did he know any other home work being done.

Today in making a visit to Kempf Bros. a wastermanufacturer at 2613 Coral Street, Philadelphia, I learned that they had shredded a large order of cotton clips for the Trumbull Waste Mfg. Co. in connection with the air bomb order. Kempf Bros. has a very filthy plant, and any waste coming from them must be full of dirt. It is very unpleasant to think of such material going into homes.

If you desire, we should be very glad to make an investigation of the kind of homes in which this material was made up. We have evidence of a few cases in which the homes were of a very good quality the people owning their own houses, and having a back porch or yard in which the work was carried on. In other cases it was carried on in the kitchen and in view of the dirt it must have contained, this does not seem desirable. We have not been able to make a full study of the homes however, since Mr. Trumbull withheld the names and addresses. If you would like to have this study made, it would help us if you could let us have a special letter asking Mr. Trumbull to provide us with the list. Since they are obviously planning to use these same homes again in connection with the expected contract for jute balls, it might be of use to you to know something of these homes in order to determine whether it is proper for government supplies to be made in a large number of homes which precludes the possibility of close supervision, the maintenance of a high standard of sanitation, and which incurs the danger of the material being tampered with. A study of the homes however might not be necessary in order to settle the question.

Yours very truly,

Axues de Lima
Investigator

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u. s. c.

NATIONAL CONSUMERS' LEAGUE

289 FOURTH AVENUE, NEW YORK CITY

Telephone, 5923 Gramercy

President, Hon. NEWTON D. BAKER, Washington, D. C.
Treasurer, G. HERMANN KINNICUTT, New York City

General Secretary, Mrs. FLORENCE KELLEY
Publication Secretary, Miss Josephine Goldmark
Research Secretary, Miss Pauline Goldmark

July 25, 1918

Major Samuel J. Rosensohn
Room 490
War Department
Washington, D.C.

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be made in a large number of homes which precludes the possibility of close supervision, the maintenance of a high standard of sanitation, and which incurs the danger of the material being tampered with. A study of the homes however might not be necessary in order to settle the question.

Yours very truly,

Opus de Lima

Investigator

Adel.

u.s.c.

(Hancock!)

September 26, 1918.

Miss Alice W. Hunt,
Chairman of Women in Industry,
The Consumers' League of Rhode Island,
Providence, Rhode Island.

My dear Miss Hunt:

Your letter of September 23rd and the clipping from the Providence Sunday Journal describing home work for a cartridge plant in Rhode Island is received this morning, and the matter is being referred at once to the office of the Secretary of War for investigation and report from the Ordnance Department. I shall notify you as soon as the information is at hand. Thank you for bringing this to our attention.

Sincerely yours,

Mary Van Kleeck, Director,
Woman in Industry Service.

September 26, 1918.

MEMORANDUM

FOR: Major F. W. Tully, War Department.
FROM: Miss Van Kleeck, Director, Women in Industry Service.
SUBJECT: Home work for munitions factories in Rhode Island.

1. The enclosed letter from the Chairman of the Women in Industry Committee in Providence, Rhode Island and the clipping from the Providence Sunday Journal bring to our attention home work in assembling cartridge clips. This is, of course, contrary to general orders #13 which advise against home work. Experience in the past would also indicate that this is an inefficient method of handling any part of production.
2. It is suggested that the matter be referred through the Ordnance Department to the Women's Branch for investigation and report. When the report is received the Woman in Industry Service will be glad to take the matter up with the Committee on Women in Industry of Rhode Island.

Mary Van Kleeck, Director,
Woman in Industry Service.

COPY

THE CONSUMERS' LEAGUE OF RHODE ISLAND.

Providence, R. I., Sept. 23, 1918.

Miss Mary Van Kleeck, Chief,
Woman's Division, Department of Labor,
Washington, D. C.

My dear Miss Van Kleeck:

I am enclosing an account that appeared in our local paper yesterday, telling about a bad case, it seems to me, of home work in this city. I will get the name of the factory and any other details that you may want if you so desire. It seems to me that it is wholly against the government's attitude regarding home work and is so blatantly published that I fear its influence will be bad and that it should be checked.

Hoping that you will not have too many interests to prevent your taking this up, I am,

Very sincerely yours,

Alice W. Hunt,

Chairman of Women in Industry
Rhode Island.

SUBSTANCE OF CLIPPING FROM THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL
SEPTEMBER 22, 1918 SENT TO MAJOR TULLY.

To enable R. I. concern to increase output and take on another contract with government, 25 Providence women are working in homes, putting together the clips that hold the cartridges with which American rifles are loaded. They begin work at four o'clock in the morning, working by lamplight until breakfast time. After household duties and between household duties they work on the cartridge clips. The work is also done in the evening until bedtime, which hour is governed according to the task set to be done each day.

The firm was hampered by lack of room, and for this reason is having assembling done outside the shop. The women are being paid on the piece basis. The bases and springs are taken out in large quantities and on the following day the assembled work is picked up and new work distributed. The women are making from \$10 to \$12 a week each. Some of the women assemble as many as 6000 clips a day.

This work has already enabled the contractor to exceed the stipulated production and to seek for another and larger order.