

RAILWAY INDUSTRIAL ENGINEERING

WAR DEPARTMENT,
WASHINGTON.

October 5, 1918.

From: War Department, Major F. W. Tully.
To: *Miss* Mary Van Kleeck, Director Women in Industry Service.
Subject: Application of Railway and Industrial Engineering
Company of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, for variation
in State laws respecting employment of women.

I have forwarded a letter from the Railway and Industrial Engineering Company of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, together with your reply, to the Industrial Service Section of the Ordnance Department, asking for their recommendation ~~in~~ the matter.

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Detailed to Office of Secretary of War.

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COPY

Railway and Industrial Engineering Company

Pittsburgh, Pa.

Works and Main Office

Greensburg, Pa.

Sept. 3, 1918.

Inquiry Office, Information and Education Service,

Department of Labor,

1706 G Street, N.W.,

Washington, D. C.

Gentlemen:

We are contemplating putting women in our factory in constantly increasing numbers. We are engaged in the machining of 4.7" shells and miscellaneous gun carriage parts and in our regular line of electrical apparatus, all of which is being applied to war service. Pennsylvania laws are rather strict on the subject of female employment and in several respects it will be difficult to meet the demands. I would like your advice on the following points:

(1) Is anything being done that you know of to allow women to be worked on night shifts in the state of Pennsylvania?

(2) Is anything being done to obtain more than 48 hours per week service from women?

With regard to the latter question our shell production calls for ten and eleven hours continuous work on a part of the operations in some cases; part of this is, of course, paid at over-time rates. We propose putting women in as inspectors on shells and on some of the lighter operations. It would be impossible for us in the present restricted labor market to completely organize three 8 hour shifts as we could not obtain the necessary men. This being the case, what would you advise as to the method of

putting women on this work?

Very truly yours,

RAILWAY & INDUSTRIAL ENGINEERING CO.

Boeker
Vice-President

September 13, 1918.

Railway and Industrial Engineering Company,
Greensburg,
Pennsylvania.

Gentlemen:

Your letter to the Information and Education Service of the Department of Labor making inquiry regarding the application of the state labor law to your plant is received and the matter is being taken up with the War Department.

You are advised that the Pennsylvania labor law prohibits the employment of women after the hour of ten P.M. or before six A.M., but permits them to be employed fifty-four hours in the week instead of the forty-eight hours which you mention. It is the policy of the federal government to discourage employment of women for as long as ten or eleven hours, since industrial experience demonstrates that long hours are not in the interest of production.

There are of course ^{adjustments} demands to be ^{made} met in plant management making possible the effective use of women workers in

full compliance with state labor laws. If you so desire, we shall be glad to take up with the department or departments with which you have contracts the possibility of sending to your plant a representative of the Industrial Service Section of that department to confer with you regarding your problems.

Very truly yours,

Mary Van Kleeck, Director,
Woman in Industry Service.

September 13, 1918.

MEMORANDUM

FOR: Major F. W. Tully, War Department.
FROM: Miss Van Kleeck, Director, Woman in Industry Service.

The attached letter from the Railway and Industrial Engineering Company of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, is referred to you for action. The Woman in Industry Service will of course be glad to have you turn this matter over to us for investigation, in which event we shall at once take the matter up with the Ordnance Department if that is the department having a contract, and we shall notify the Pennsylvania Board of Labor and Industry. It is not likely that any immediate announcement will be made on the subject of night work as the whole matter is to be referred to the Council of National Defense. Therefore I have acknowledged the enclosed letter as the attached copy of my reply shows.

Mary Van Kleeck, Director,
Woman in Industry Service.

Return to Miss Van Kleeck

September 13, 1918.

My dear Mr. Palmer:

The Railway and Industrial Engineering Company of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, has written to the Department of Labor an inquiry as to the possibility of permitting women to be employed on night shifts. In accordance with our recently established procedure we are forwarding this letter at once to the War Department, and before taking action we shall await formal reference from them to us, at which time we shall at once communicate with you. This letter is therefore sent to you as an informal notification that this request has passed through our hands. We are advising the company that it has been referred to the War Department and that the state labor law prohibits the employment of women at night.

Very truly yours,

Mary Van Kleeck, Director,
Woman in Industry Service.

Acting Commissioner L. R. Palmer,
Department of Labor and Industry,
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
INFORMATION AND EDUCATION SERVICE
WASHINGTON

September 6th, 1918.

MEMORANDUM FOR MISS VAN KLEECK:

The attached letter is respectfully referred to you
for attention. We have written the Railway and Industrial
Engineering Company advising them of the reference.

ROGER W. BABSON, CHIEF,

By

Alice L. Kercher

Inquiry Office