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INDUSTRIAL HOME WORK
UNDER THE
NATIONAL RECOVERY ADMINISTRATION

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
FRANCES PERKINS, Secretary
CHILDREN'S BUREAU . . . Katharine F. Lenroot, Chief

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By
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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR,
CHILDREN'S BUREAU,
Washington, June 26, 1936.

MADAM: There is transmitted herewith a report on industrial home work under the National Recovery Administration. This study was undertaken at the request of the National Recovery Administration for the purpose of making available to its home-work committee information regarding the conditions under which home work was being carried on in industries in which it had not been abolished by the codes. A preliminary report was prepared and transmitted to the National Recovery Administration. Because of the widespread interest in the many problems involved in industrial home work and the effect of this method of production on labor standards, it seems desirable to make the findings of the survey available to the general public. The field work for this study was carried on jointly by the Women's Bureau and the Industrial Division of the Children's Bureau.

The report was written by Mary Skinner, and the section on legal regulations was prepared by Ella A. Merritt, both of the Children's Bureau.

Respectfully submitted.

KATHARINE F. LENROOT, *Chief.*

Hon. FRANCES PERKINS,
Secretary of Labor.

INDUSTRIAL HOME WORK UNDER THE NATIONAL RECOVERY ADMINISTRATION

Part I.—INDUSTRIAL HOME WORK IN GENERAL

THE STUDY—ITS SCOPE AND PURPOSE

For more than a century industrial home work has been recognized as an industrial and social evil, but in spite of investigations, agitation, and attempts at control through State legislation this method of production has continued. During the depression such gains as had been made through State regulation were rapidly being lost in the general breakdown of labor standards. When the National Industrial Recovery Act was passed in the spring of 1933, home-work earnings had dropped to almost incredibly low levels, and hours of work were often inhumanly long. Under the National Recovery Administration, when manufacturers undertook to set code standards that raised wages and shortened hours for factory employees they were forced to consider industrial home work from the point of view both of labor standards and of competitive trade practices.

The establishment of uniform labor standards through the codes for the various industries brought a general recognition of the menace of home work to decent labor standards for factory workers. Employers who were willing to pay fair wages to their employees saw that they would be helpless against the competition of employers who cut their production costs by unlimited home work. Therefore the necessity of controlling industrial home work was accepted by the leaders in many industries, and 107 codes contained provisions regarding home work, either abolishing it altogether or providing some means for its regulation. This move on the part of manufacturers themselves to control home work was a great forward step in the long struggle to eliminate the practice and was considered one of the greatest social gains made under the National Recovery Administration. The codes, however, were drawn up by the different industries to meet the needs of each industry irrespective of the needs of other industries. As the codes were put into operation, a lack of uniformity in the provisions relating to home work began to work hardship in some industries and to confuse manufacturers and code authorities alike. Finally it became evident that if progress in controlling home work was to continue and indeed if the gains already made through the N. R. A. codes were to be held, uniform policies would have to be formulated and the various home-work provisions improved and simplified. Therefore a special home-work committee was appointed in the National Recovery Administration in March 1934 to study the whole home-work situation and to make recom-

mendations as to methods of dealing with the numerous problems that had arisen.

This study of industrial home work, made by the Women's Bureau and the Children's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor, was undertaken at the request of the Administrator of the National Recovery Administration for the use of the N. R. A. home-work committee. The purpose of the study was to ascertain the conditions under which home work was being carried on in industries in which it had not been abolished by the codes; to learn whether the industries in which home work was subject to specific code regulation were successfully maintaining the code standards governing industrial home work; and, if code standards were not being successfully maintained, wherein and why they were failing. It was proposed also to determine if possible, in industries in which there was no specific regulation of home work through the codes, whether the minimum labor standards set for factory workers had affected conditions of work for home workers.

The study presents a cross section of conditions among home workers in 28 industries in which home work was continued under the codes. Field work was begun in June 1934 and continued through October 1934. The investigation was carried on in seven States: Maine, Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Iowa, and Texas.

Information was obtained chiefly through interviews with home workers and with manufacturers and contractors in the industries covered by the study. Code authorities, officials of State departments of labor, and representatives of local unions also were consulted. The findings of the study are based on interviews with 203 manufacturers and contractors and with 1,473 families, which included 2,320 home workers.

Data regarding hours of work and earnings were obtained from the workers only for the week previous to the visit, as in most industries home work is too irregular to permit estimating hours and earnings over prolonged periods. An attempt was made to supplement this information with data from pay rolls, but this proved impossible, as few firms kept complete pay-roll records for home workers. Most employers noted merely the amount of work given out, the date it was taken and returned, and the amount paid the worker for each assignment. The amount may have represented a week's or a month's work and may have been the earnings of one or of several persons.

ATTEMPTS AT LEGAL REGULATION

Attempts to control industrial home work through State laws have developed out of legislation enacted in the last two decades of the nineteenth century to regulate factory work done either in the insanitary and overcrowded tenement sweatshops set up by the small manufacturer or contractor or in living quarters in tenement houses. These two kinds of work places did not fall into distinct and separate classes because it was a common practice for tenement dwellers who took in home work to bring their relatives and neighbors into their homes or into shops adjoining their homes to share the work. For many years this system developed practically unchecked before any regulation was attempted.

As early as 1828 Matthew Carey called public attention to the plight of between 18,000 and 20,000 women home workers in the clothing industry in New York, Philadelphia, Boston, and Baltimore. In words that sound like reports made in the 1930's, he said that at least 12,000 of these could not earn, by constant employment for 16 hours out of the 24, more than $1.25 a week, and that, in "many cases, half or a third of their time is expended in attending their children, and no small portion in traveling 8, 10, 12, or 14 squares for work, and as many to take it back when finished."[1]

The wretched lot of these families and the serious health menace, both to the consumers of the products made under these conditions and to the workers themselves, finally aroused public opinion to the need for remedial measures. The first type of home work regulated by law was cigar manufacturing. Following a decade of labor disturbances in this industry, the home-work system became entrenched in the trade through the transfer of the work by employers from large shops to small tenement-house shops in an effort to obtain a supply of docile labor. In 1884 the New York Legislature prohibited the manufacture of cigars and other tobacco products in tenement houses in cities of over 500,000 where there were rooms or apartments occupied as living and sleeping quarters, thus striking at both kinds of tenement work. But the New York Court of Appeals, in the famous *Jacobs* case,[2] held in 1885 that the legislature could not under the guise of police regulations thus invade the personal right of a cigar maker to carry on his own trade peacefully in his own home. The court failed to see that the law had any relation to the public health and declared the act unconstitutional because it arbitrarily deprived the individual of his property and of his personal liberty.

This decision effectively discouraged legislation interfering with the rights of the worker to manufacture in his own home, and no attempt was made to prohibit industrial home work, as the term is understood today, for nearly 30 years. A number of States, however, continued to attack the problem through laws prohibiting certain types of work in tenements by persons other than "members of the family dwelling therein", and by regulatory laws; for instance, employers were required to obtain permits before giving out materials to home workers in tenements and to keep registers of their workers, or inspection was required of the premises on which home work was to be done to determine whether they conformed to certain minimum sanitary standards that were established, such as freedom from infectious disease and a certain minimum air space for each worker. By 1904 12 States,[3] including besides New York a number of other important industrial States, had laws of this type on their statute books.

Gradually this kind of legislation, together with the increased stringency of provisions for factory inspection and laws on tenement buildings, greatly reduced the numbers of tenement sweatshops. But it was not until 1913 that a prohibitory law was again passed applying to the worker in his own home. In that year the New York Legislature enacted a law supplementing the regulatory provision

[1] See Report on Condition of Woman and Child Wage Earners in the United States, 1910, vol. 9, p. 123. S. Doc. No. 645, Washington, 1910. For further reference, see Carey's Select Excerpta, vol. 13, pp. 138–142, dated July 1, 1830; and Free Trade Advocate, Philadelphia, Mar. 14, 1829.

[2] *In re Jacobs*, 98 New York 98 (1885).

[3] Connecticut, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin.

already in effect and entirely prohibiting the manufacture of food, dolls and dolls' clothing, and children's wearing apparel in tenement houses, even in the home of the worker himself. This prohibition of home work on these particular articles has been judicially sustained as an exercise of the police power for the protection of the public health. Only one other State, however, (New Jersey) has enacted a prohibitory law of this type.[4]

Because of the large numbers of workers involved in New York State and the spectacularly bad conditions in the old-type tenement houses in greater New York City, attempts to regulate industrial home work in that State are especially significant and illustrate how the home-work system becomes so entrenched in a State as to defy the best efforts of State legislation and State officials to remedy its evils. The factory investigating commission, created in 1911 after the fire at the factory of the Triangle Waist Co. to conduct a broad inquiry into the conditions under which manufacturing was done,[5] reported that the home-work licensing law of 1904 still in effect in New York was inadequate. The commission condemned the home-work system because the cost to the community in life and health of children and mothers was too great to justify its existence and because by using it the manufacturer could avoid the State factory regulations. The commission reported that from an economic point of view the continuance of home work was unjustified and that public welfare would be promoted by its eradication. In view, however, of the difficulties of immediate elimination the commission suggested that certain specific prohibitions be included in the law, that additions to the list be made from time to time, and that if investigation showed that the evils could not be corrected the system eventually be abolished entirely.[6] Considerable improvement in administrative machinery resulted from this investigation; the scope of the regulatory provisions was broadened; and the prohibitions above mentioned (food, dolls, and dolls' and children's clothing) were included in the law. Ten years later another commission of the State of New York, this time dealing with child-welfare laws, went into the home-work problem.[7] It strongly endorsed the stand of the earlier commission that the State's ultimate policy should be total prohibition, and in commenting on its report the State industrial commissioner said:

> There is no doubt that on principle manufacturing in tenement houses should be eliminated. * * * In the 10 years that have intervened since the factory commission's report practically nothing has been done toward the solution of the problem. If the advice of the factory commission had been followed, manufacturing in tenements by this time would either have been completely eliminated or the problem would have dwindled to one of much smaller proportions. Instead this system has become so deeply entrenched in our industrial life that its very

[4] The New York statute was upheld in 1915 by the appellate division of the New York Supreme Court in the case of *In re Belofsky*. This case was dismissed in 1916 by the New York Court of Appeals, owing to the manufacturer's failure to carry on his appeal. In 1920 the appellate division of the New York Supreme Court, first department, also upheld the provision in the case of *People* v. *Rapport* (193 app. div. 135) holding that a statute prohibiting the manufacture of infants' wearing apparel in tenements used for residence purposes was a valid exercise of the State's police power. This legal provision, however, has not been passed upon by the State court of last resort or by any Federal court. The New Jersey statute has not been passed upon by the courts. In Oregon a prohibition of home work in the needle trades has been put into effect through a ruling of the State welfare commission, effective Apr. 29, 1934.

[5] Preliminary Report of the New York (State) Factory Investigating Commission, 1912, vol. 1, p. 13. Albany, 1912.

[6] Second Report of the New York (State) Factory Investigating Commission, 1913, vol. 1, pp. 118–123. Albany, 1913.

[7] Third Annual Report of the New York (State) Commission to Examine Laws Relating to Child Welfare, p. 12. Legis. Doc. No. 88. Albany, 1924.

involvement is the only reason that can be given for not now recommending the immediate complete prohibition of home work in tenements.[8]

The result of the 1923 investigation was a tightening of the home-work law enforcement; not until 1934, however, was the law itself strengthened. Thirteen States,[9] including New York and New Jersey, had in effect at the time of this study legislation directed toward some measure of control of the home worker, but except in New York and Pennsylvania and in Connecticut under the law passed in 1933 this control extends in practice to little more than sanitary conditions. The laws or regulations of 10 of these States [10] require a license to be obtained by the employer, the home worker, or the owner of the premises on which home work is done; under all the laws premises must be inspected and employers must keep lists of their home workers and under some laws must file them with the State labor department. In New York under an amendment to the law passed in 1934, employers giving out home work must pay a license fee of $25. Child-labor provisions of the labor laws apply to industrial home work in New York, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, and Wisconsin. Laws regulating women's hours of labor are made applicable to home workers in Pennsylvania and Connecticut. In Connecticut the law requires that the wage rates for home workers shall be not lower than the rates paid in the factory for similar work. Some attempt has been made to apply minimum-wage laws to home work in California and Wisconsin.

In spite of nearly 50 years of attempted regulation the problem is still unsolved. In the industrial States great difficulties exist, though in a few some progress has been made; in the agricultural States, to which more and more home work is being sent from urban centers, there is not even a recognition that a legislative need exists.

Regulation through union agreements.

Some regulation of industrial home work has also been brought about through agreements between unions and employers. A beginning in this direction was made in the garment trades coincident with the rise of strong unions in that industry. Among the abuses against which the cloakmakers, dressmakers, men's clothing workers, white goods and lingerie workers, and other groups waged successive strike battles between 1909 and 1913 was the practice of giving workers tasks to take home with them to complete outside factory hours.[11] Leaders of the cloak-and-suit strike in New York City in 1910 first visualized the possibility of abolishing home work by means of agreements with employers. As a result home work was banned in the

[8] Report on Manufacturing in Tenements Submitted to the Commission to Examine the Laws Relating to Child Welfare, by Bernard L. Shientag, State Industrial Commissioner, p. 7. New York State Department of Labor. Albany, 1924.

[9] These States are California, Connecticut, Indiana, Maryland, Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and Wisconsin. In 1935 the Connecticut home-work law was supplemented by a requirement that the home worker obtain a certificate from the State department of labor, allowing the distribution of home work only to persons 16 or over and only under certain restricted conditions. The New York law was amended in 1935 to give the industrial commissioner power to determine within what industries home work might continue without jeopardizing wages and working conditions of factory workers in the industry and without injuring the health and welfare of the home workers, and to restrict the granting of permits to such industries. The commissioner, in May 1936, issued an order prohibiting home work in the men's and boys' clothing industry and, with certain exceptions, in the merchant-tailoring industry.

[10] California, Indiana, Maryland, Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. In 1936 Rhode Island enacted a law effective on June 1 of that year requiring employers and home workers to obtain licenses from the director of the State department of labor, permitting home work only under specified conditions, and prohibiting the use of children under 16 years of age on home work.

[11] The Women's Garment Workers, by Louis Levine, p. 176. New York, B. W. Huebsch, Inc., 1924.

protocol signed September 2, 1910, by the Cloak, Suit, and Skirt Manufacturers' Protective Association and certain New York City local unions of the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union, and also in subsequent agreements.[12]

In spite of repeated efforts, however, the needle-trades unions were never able to put a complete stop to the giving out of home work, and the needle trades have had the unenviable reputation of providing the largest volume of factory work that is done in workers' homes. There is every evidence that in 1933, before the N. R. A. codes went into effect, the existing regulations of home work did not and could not remedy the evils of the home-work situation.

Union leaders turned again to collective bargaining as a means of supplementing State attempts to control home work after the invalidation of the N. R. A. codes as a result of the decision of the United States Supreme Court in the *Schechter* case in May 1935. The agreement signed in July 1935, by representatives of the Clothing Manufacturers' Exchange and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America for the metropolitan area of New York, attempted to salvage as much as possible of the N. R. A. codes. This agreement was to run for 2 years and included a prohibition against farming out work to employees to be done at home.[13] Among other agreements containing a similar provision is one signed for the Baltimore area on August 14, 1935, by the Baltimore Clothing Manufacturers' Association and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America.[14] A prohibition against home work was also included in the agreement that was signed in September 1935 between the Neckwear-Makers Union in New York and the manufacturers.[15]

DEVELOPMENT OF HOME-WORK PROVISIONS OF THE CODES

One great difficulty in attempting to regulate industrial home work through State legislation is that the jurisdiction of the State law stops at the State line, whereas home work may be sent easily from one State to another. Even though the employer sending out the work and the worker receiving it may each live in a State having a law regulating home work, the law of the State of origin cannot follow the goods across the State line, and the law of the receiving State does not apply to the manufacturer in another State.

The N. R. A. codes, by setting up standards on the basis of industries rather than States, made it possible for the first time to establish control over work sent from one State to another.

Of the 107 codes containing provisions on home work that were in effect at the time this study was made, 90 provided for the complete abolition of home work either upon the effective date of the code or within a specified period. Of the remaining 17 codes, 10 restricted home work to specific operations or provided for a gradual reduction in the number of home workers, apparently with the idea of complete elimination eventually, and 7 codes permitted home work to continue but provided for the establishment of piece or wage rates for the home-work processes. Practically all the other codes, though they did not specifically mention home work, defined the term "employee"

[12] Industrial Court of the Cloak, Suit, and Skirt Industry of New York City, p. 56. U. S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics Report No. 144. Washington, D. C., 1914.
[13] Daily News Record (New York), Aug. 15, 1935, and New York Herald Tribune, July 30, 1935.
[14] Daily News Record, Aug. 15, 1935.
[15] Advance, March 1936. Published by Amalgamated Ladies' Clothing Workers of America, New York

in such general terms as apparently to include home workers, thus making them subject to the same wage, hour, and child-labor provisions as factory workers.

The initiative in prohibiting home work was taken by the garment trades, in which the system had been most strongly entrenched. The code of the coat-and-suit industry, approved August 4, 1933, provided for the immediate abolition of home work. Three weeks later home work was abolished in the men's clothing industry—probably the largest home-work industry in the country—with a period of only 3 months allowed for adjustment. The example set by these two industries was followed by many others, of which the following were the more important as measured by the number of home workers employed in the industry: Artificial flower and feather; corset and brassiere; medium- and low-priced jewelry; men's garter, suspender, and belt; men's neckwear; millinery; pleating and stitching, bonnaz, and embroidery; powder puff; toy and plaything; undergarment and negligee; underwear and allied products. Manufacturers in the drapery- and upholstery-trimming industry also agreed to the elimination of home work, but after the code was approved a stay of this prohibition was obtained and at the time of the study home work was being distributed as in the past.

The principal industries in which home work was not abolished but had been limited to specific operations and the industries in which it had been regulated or controlled include: Art needlework; freshwater pearl button; cotton garment; handkerchief; infants' and children's wear; knitted outerwear; ladies' handbag; leather and woolen-knit glove; light sewing. Although no mention was made of home workers in the code for the lace industry, the term "employee" was so defined as apparently to include them, and the code authority had set up a system of wage and hour regulation throughout the industry.

It was significant that a number of other industries, in which the home-work system had not yet become entrenched, took steps to prevent the development of home work by prohibiting it in their codes.

Because the immediate abolition of home work in industries in which it had been a custom for many years might work a hardship to persons handicapped for factory employment, the President issued an Executive order on May 15, 1934, exempting certain groups of workers from the home-work provisions of the codes.

This order was administered by the United States Department of Labor in cooperation with the National Recovery Administration, and workers desiring exemption under the order were required to obtain home-work certificates from their State department of labor or other designated agency. Certificates were issued only to: (1) Workers incapacitated for factory employment because of physical disability; (2) workers who had been accustomed in the past to earn their living by home work and who were too old to adjust to factory routine; and (3) workers whose services were absolutely essential at home to care for an invalid. Home workers obtaining certificates under the Executive order were to receive the same rate of pay as factory workers doing the same kind of work, and their hours of work were subject to the same limitations as those of factory employees.

HOME-WORK OPERATIONS AND CONDITIONS OF WORK

Home-work operations.

The work encountered in the homes in the course of the study varied from the simplest mechanical processes to highly skilled and artistic hand work. More than half of the families, however, were employed on the more skilled processes. The kinds of work being done and the number of families engaged in each operation are listed below:

Home-work operations	*Number of families*
Total	1,473
Knitted-outerwear industry:	
Knitting and crocheting infants' garments	219
Knitting women's suits and dresses	117
Knitting and crocheting berets and scarfs	118
Lace industry:	
Drawing threads	124
Cutting lace	93
Making and embroidering infants' and children's wear	138
Making samples of art needlework	109
Carding fresh-water pearl and other buttons	140
Making doll dresses	86
Stringing tags	76
Embroidering and beading	51
Making leather gloves	50
Carding bobby pins, bunching safety pins	44
Making and embroidering collars	26
Making ribbon bows and pompoms for slippers	15
Cutting embroidery	15
Embroidering and roll-hemming handkerchiefs	10
Stringing greeting cards	9
Appliqueing lace and making button holes on undergarments and negligees	8
Making lamp shades	6
Machine sewing on cotton garments	3
Pasting beads on jewelry	3
Making shoulder straps	3
Miscellaneous operations	10

Most of these operations are described by their names, but a few require a brief explanation. Infants' knitted and crocheted garments included sacques, sweaters, bootees, leggings, and caps, of both simple and elaborate designs. Women's and children's berets were usually the cheap kind that retail for 25 or 50 cents. A worker of average skill could make one in an hour. Women's knitted suits and dresses were of all styles and patterns, even evening gowns. Some of these retailed for $75 or more.

The work on infants' and children's wear consisted of a variety of processes, such as embroidering, smocking, hemstitching, hand hemming, and hand seaming. Occasionally, in spite of the fact that it was prohibited under the code, machine sewing was found also. Most of the hand work was very delicate, and almost perfect workmanship was demanded by the factory.

Thread drawing in the lace industry consisted of separating bands of lace by drawing the thread that holds the bands together as they come from the loom. Cutting, as the name implies, consisted of cutting scalloped edgings, yokes, and medallions from the mesh or net in which they were woven.

Home work on art needlework was confined entirely to the making of samples for exhibition in art-needlework departments of retail

stores. The work varied with the trend in styles and with individual firms. Sometimes it was simple crochet and at other times it was intricate embroidery that required considerable artistic ability, such as needlepoint.

Making gloves, unlike most home-work processes, was a machine operation and usually involved the complete manufacture of the article. It was probably the most highly skilled work found in the course of the study.

Number and age of home workers.

As a large proportion of the home work permitted under the codes required skill and experience, home work, at the time of the study, was not a family activity to the same extent that it had been in the past, but in nearly 40 percent of the families visited there were at least two workers, and in 13 percent there were three or more. The majority of the workers were adults, 60 percent of them being between 20 and 50 years of age; 8 percent, however, were children under 16 years (table 1).

Although great progress was made through the codes in eliminating the employment of children, child labor continued in those industries in which the home work permitted was unskilled or could be broken down into simple processes. In fact, there is reason to believe that child labor continued to an even greater extent than the findings of this study would indicate and that only a partial report was obtained of the number of children doing home work. In Pennsylvania and New York, where such work constitutes a violation of both the State child-labor laws and the home-work laws and regulations, parents have always hesitated to admit that their children are employed. At the time of the study the same reluctance to give information on this point was found among home workers in such industries as the lace and fresh-water pearl button industries, where parents were required by certain firms to sign a statement to the effect that the children would not be allowed to help with the work. In many instances there were indications that children were working, although the parents said they were not.

A few children under 16 were found doing every kind of work encountered in the study, except the work of making gloves and samples of art needlework, but it was in the manufacture of doll's dresses that they were employed in the largest numbers. Very young children can clip threads and turn the dresses and older children can easily do the machine operations on less expensive models. The number of children found working on dolls' dresses was several times that reported on any other type of work.

TABLE 1.—*Industry and age of industrial home workers in families included in the study*

Industry	Industrial home workers																			
	Total	Total for whom age was reported	Under 14 years		14 years, under 16		16 years, under 18		18 years, under 20		20 years, under 30		30 years, under 40		40 years, under 50		20 years, under 50, not otherwise specified		50 years and over		Age not reported
			Number	Percent[1]	Number	Percent[1]	Number	Percent[1]	Number	Percent[1]	Number	Percent[1]	Number	Percent[1]	Number	Percent[1]	Number	Percent[1]	Number	Percent[1]	
Total	2,320	2,282	100	4	79	3	158	7	141	6	393	17	382	17	423	19	174	8	432	19	38
Knitted outerwear	533	517	10	2	13	3	18	3	19	4	83	16	81	16	103	20	58	11	132	26	16
Infants' knitted garments	264	250	8	3	6	2	10	4	8	3	45	18	37	15	44	18	7	3	85	34	14
Women's knitted garments	129	129	1	1	------	------	3	2	5	4	12	9	21	16	24	19	33	26	30	23	------
Berets	120	120	1	1	6	5	4	3	4	3	24	20	20	17	28	23	17	14	16	13	------
Other	20	18	------	------	1	------	1	------	2	------	2	------	3	------	7	------	1	------	1	------	2
Lace	425	419	16	4	19	5	46	11	30	7	54	13	77	18	77	18	23	5	77	18	6
Drawing threads	254	248	10	4	12	5	26	10	13	5	30	12	42	17	46	19	3	1	66	27	6
Cutting lace	171	171	6	4	7	4	20	12	17	10	24	14	35	20	31	18	20	12	11	6	------
Infants' and children's wear	232	230	5	2	7	3	13	6	16	7	89	39	53	23	24	10	1	(2)	22	10	2
Art needlework	135	130	------	------	------	------	7	5	4	3	32	25	14	11	27	21	18	14	28	22	5
Fresh-water pearl buttons	158	158	8	5	1	1	3	2	8	5	29	18	32	20	32	20	------	------	45	28	------
Dolls and accessories	191	189	33	17	29	15	19	10	12	6	16	8	20	11	46	24	------	------	14	7	2
Tags	156	155	7	5	4	3	11	7	9	6	20	13	22	14	19	12	27	17	36	23	1
Embroidery and beading	72	69	6	9	1	1	11	16	4	6	6	9	18	26	11	16	7	10	5	7	3
Gloves	68	67	------	------	------	------	4	6	3	4	11	16	13	19	19	28	4	6	13	19	1
Miscellaneous	350	348	15	4	5	1	26	7	36	10	53	15	52	15	65	19	36	10	60	17	2

[1] Not shown where number of home workers was less than 50.
[2] Less than 1 percent.

Hours of work.

Owing to the irregularity of the work it was impossible to obtain information regarding working hours from all the home workers visited, but such information was obtained from the chief home workers in 1,069 families. Although practically all the codes, by their definition of the term "employee", seemed to cover home workers, 34 percent of the home workers interviewed reported weekly hours that were in excess of their code maximum, which ranged from 35 to 40 hours per week. Approximately one-fourth of them had worked at least 50 hours during the week previous to the interview, and almost one-tenth reported 70 hours or more (table 2). The median hours worked were 33.7.

Excessively long hours were reported most frequently by workers on women's knitted garments and on infants' and children's garments. Almost half of the workers on women's knitted garments and one-third of the workers on infants' and children's garments reported 60 working hours or more a week. According to figures compiled annually by the State Department of Labor and Industry in Pennsylvania, the only State in which such figures are available, the hours of work reported by home workers rose steadily throughout the depression.[16] With unemployment in almost every household, competition for the work became so keen that families rushed each consignment through as quickly as possible in order not to lose their chance at the next consignment. Furthermore, with piece rates as low as they were, long hours were imperative if home workers were to earn even a pittance.

Night work, which has always been one of the evils of the home-work system, was still frequent. Many home workers told of rising several hours earlier than the rest of the family in order to "get in a few hours before breakfast" or of sitting up until midnight or later to finish an assignment that had to be returned the next day. Women working on lace, tags, and fresh-water pearl buttons in particular reported that the greater part of their work had to be done at night because of the schedule of deliveries and collections maintained by the factory. In the tag industry the total weekly hours of the home workers seldom even approximated the code limit, but tags are usually manufactured on order and home workers were required to rush their work through with all possible speed even though it meant working far into the night. One family, in which three home workers were employed steadily at stringing tags, reported that the work was received daily "around 6 p. m.", and as it had to be ready for collection the following morning, they frequently sat up until 2 a. m. to finish it.

The hours of work reported by the home workers did not include the time spent in collecting and returning work. Complaints were heard on all sides about time lost in this way. According to the workers it often took from 2 to 3 hours in the best part of the working day to make the trip to the factory, wait for finished work to be approved, and return home. One woman interviewed told of waiting from 8:30 a. m. to 1 or 2 p. m. on numerous occasions. Home workers engaged in making infants' and children's clothes were particularly affected, as whenever a new style or pattern was given out they were required to make a sample garment before they left the factory.

[16] Industrial Home Work in Pennsylvania under the N. R. A., p. 12. Department of Labor and Industry, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Harrisburg, 1935. (Mimeographed.)

TABLE 2.—*Industry and weekly hours of chief home worker*

Industry	Families of industrial home workers																
	Total	Weekly hours of chief home worker															
		Total reported	Less than 20		20, less than 30		30, less than 40		40, less than 50		50, less than 60		60, less than 70		70 or more		Not reported
			Number	Percent [1]	Number	Percent [1]	Number	Percent [1]	Number	Percent [1]	Number	Percent [1]	Number	Percent [1]	Number	Percent [1]	
Total	1,473	1,069	240	22	196	18	207	19	172	16	86	8	86	8	82	8	404
Knitted outerwear	454	298	64	21	50	17	62	21	43	14	22	7	24	8	33	11	156
Infants' knitted garments	219	117	35	30	23	20	31	26	17	15	2	2	5	4	4	3	102
Women's knitted garments	117	77	3	4	2	3	16	21	12	16	8	10	14	18	22	29	40
Berets	101	92	24	26	23	25	14	15	12	13	9	10	4	4	6	7	9
Other	17	12	2	-------	2	-------	1	-------	2	-------	3	-------	1	-------	1	-------	5
Lace	217	182	56	31	30	16	34	19	31	17	12	7	15	8	4	2	35
Drawing threads	124	99	45	45	20	20	18	18	9	9	4	4	3	3	-------	-------	25
Cutting lace	93	83	11	13	10	12	16	19	22	27	8	10	12	14	4	5	10
Infants' and children's wear	138	122	5	4	17	14	20	16	24	20	16	13	17	14	23	19	16
Art needlework	109	103	11	11	17	17	28	27	22	21	7	7	10	10	8	8	6
Fresh-water pearl buttons	100	68	20	29	18	26	15	22	6	9	7	10	2	3	-------	-------	32
Dolls and accessories	86	31	9	-------	3	-------	8	-------	2	-------	2	-------	4	-------	3	-------	55
Tags	76	45	25	-------	14	-------	5	-------	1	-------	-------	-------	-------	-------	-------	-------	31
Embroidery and beading	51	33	11	-------	8	-------	5	-------	2	-------	5	-------	-------	-------	2	-------	18
Gloves	50	48	12	-------	15	-------	9	-------	12	-------	-------	-------	-------	-------	-------	-------	2
Miscellaneous	192	139	27	19	24	17	21	15	29	21	15	11	14	10	9	6	53

[1] Not shown where number of families reporting was less than 50.

Earnings from home work.

Hourly earnings of chief home worker.—The low earnings prevailing in home-work industries before the time of the National Recovery Administration continued after the codes were in effect. Of the 1,044 chief home workers reporting hourly earnings from their home work, more than half, 55 percent, had earned less than 10 cents an hour the week previous to the interview and a little more than one-third, 35 percent, had made no more than 6 cents an hour. Twenty women reported hourly earnings of only 1 cent. In the infants' knitted-garment industry two-thirds of the workers and in the infants' and children's wear industry almost half of the workers had earned less than 5 cents an hour. Comparatively high earnings of as much as 20 cents an hour were reported by appreciable numbers of home workers in only three of the industries studied, gloves, lace, and art needlework (table 3).

Although many firms had increased to some extent their rates of pay to home workers after the N. R. A. codes became effective, increased rates did not always mean increased earnings. Many workers reported that a demand for added work on the article often accompanied the raise in rates, and because of the extra time needed to complete this additional work hourly earnings amounted to no more than they did under the old rates. In some instances hourly earnings had even decreased because additional work had been required without an increase in pay. Furthermore, even when rates were advanced as much as 75 and 100 percent, as in the button industry, the original rate was often so low that the increase in earnings amounted to very little in actual cash. At the time of the study 78 percent of the home workers engaged in carding buttons were still earning less than 10 cents an hour and none were making as much as 20 cents an hour.

In only two of the industries studied—leather gloves and fresh-water pearl buttons—had piece rates been established under the codes at the time of this study, and in both of these the rate set for home workers was less than the minimum set for factory workers. Although in most of the other industries included in the study the codes apparently provided by their definition of the term "employee" that home workers be paid the same wages as factory workers, only in the lace industry were any efforts being made to enforce this provision. And even in that industry, in spite of the efforts of the code authority, the earnings of only a small number of the home workers were commensurate with factory wages. More than half, 57 percent, of the lace workers for whom earnings were reported had earned less than 20 cents an hour the week previous to the visit, although the minimum wage set by the code was 32½ cents an hour.

Weekly earnings of family.—Because the family group rather than the individual was the working unit in most households where there was more than one home worker, the earnings of the individual worker could not always be determined. Weekly earnings as reported in this study, therefore, represent family earnings. In the majority, 61 percent, of the 1,370 families from which information was obtained as to weekly earnings, there was only one home worker; in 39 percent there were two or more. But whether one person or several worked, the weekly earnings reported by the large majority of the families were below subsistence level. Forty-eight percent had earned less than $3 the week previous to the visit; 70 percent had earned less than $5; and 89 percent had earned less than $10 (table 4).

TABLE 3.—*Industry and hourly earnings of chief home worker*

Industry	Families of industrial home workers														
	Total	Hourly earnings of chief home worker													
		Total reported	Less than 5 cents		5 cents, less than 10 cents		10 cents, less than 20 cents		20 cents, less than 30 cents		30 cents, less than 40 cents		40 cents or more		Not reported
			Number	Percent [1]	Number	Percent [1]	Number	Percent [1]	Number	Percent [1]	Number	Percent [1]	Number	Percent [1]	
Total	1,473	1,044	184	18	394	38	268	26	107	10	58	6	33	3	429
Knitted outerwear	454	296	99	33	134	45	55	19	6	2	1	(2)	1	(2)	158
Infants' knitted garments	219	116	78	67	32	28	5	4	------	------	------	------	1	1	103
Women's knitted garments	117	77	3	4	40	52	29	38	4	5	1	1	------	------	40
Berets	101	91	17	19	59	65	13	14	2	2	------	------	------	------	10
Other	17	12	1	------	3	------	8	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	5
Lace	217	188	2	1	28	15	78	41	44	23	29	15	7	4	29
Drawing threads	124	103	------	------	12	12	45	44	25	24	18	17	3	3	21
Cutting lace	93	85	2	2	16	19	33	39	19	22	11	13	4	5	8
Infants' and children's wear	138	90	42	47	40	44	6	7	2	2	------	------	------	------	48
Art needlework	109	103	11	11	33	32	39	38	19	18	1	1	------	------	6
Fresh-water pearl buttons	100	98	3	3	73	74	22	22	------	------	------	------	------	------	2
Dolls and accessories	86	16	9	------	5	------	2	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	70
Tags	76	42	6	------	30	------	6	------	------	------	------	------	------	------	34
Embroidery and beading	51	29	2	------	7	------	10	------	5	------	3	------	2	------	22
Gloves	50	49	------	------	1	------	2	------	10	------	15	------	21	------	1
Miscellaneous	192	133	10	8	43	32	48	36	21	16	9	7	2	2	59

[1] Not shown where number of families reporting was less than 50.

[2] Less than 1 percent

TABLE 4.—*Industry and weekly earnings of families from industrial home work*

Industry	Families of industrial home workers														
	Total	Weekly earnings from home work													
		Total reported	Less than $1		$1, less than $3		$3, less than $5		$5, less than $10		$10, less than $15		$15 or more		Not reported
			Number	Percent [1]	Number	Percent [1]	Number	Percent [1]	Number	Percent [1]	Number	Percent [1]	Number	Percent [1]	
Total	1,473	1,370	177	13	483	35	296	22	257	19	100	7	57	4	103
Knitted outerwear	454	402	98	24	158	39	78	19	59	15	9	2	----	----	52
Infants' knitted garments	219	182	81	45	89	49	10	5	1	1	1	1	----	----	37
Women's knitted garments	117	105	----	----	5	5	49	47	44	42	7	7	----	----	12
Berets	101	99	15	15	57	58	19	19	8	8	----	----	----	----	2
Other	17	16	2	----	7	----	----	----	6	----	1	----	----	----	1
Lace	217	204	7	3	32	16	37	18	60	29	44	22	24	12	13
Drawing threads	124	116	4	3	20	17	24	21	43	37	22	19	3	3	8
Cutting lace	93	88	3	3	12	14	13	15	17	19	22	25	21	24	5
Infants' and children's wear	138	128	10	8	62	48	27	21	22	17	6	5	1	1	10
Art needlework	109	109	1	1	36	33	30	28	31	28	4	4	7	6	----
Fresh-water pearl buttons	100	100	5	5	58	58	32	32	4	4	1	1	----	----	----
Dolls and accessories	86	78	16	21	28	36	18	23	9	12	4	5	3	4	8
Tags	76	73	23	32	41	56	6	8	2	3	1	1	----	----	3
Embroidery and beading	51	47	8	----	14	----	11	----	9	----	3	----	2	----	4
Gloves	50	50	----	----	2	4	7	14	18	36	12	24	11	22	----
Miscellaneous	192	179	9	5	52	29	50	28	43	24	16	9	9	5	13

[1] Not shown where number of families reporting was less than 50.

In almost two-thirds of the families reporting earnings of $10 or more and in 45 percent of those earning between $5 and $10, there were at least two home workers. Families in which there was more than one worker, however, were not always assured of these higher incomes, since in a large number of instances weekly earnings of only $2 and $3 were the result of several persons' work.

The weekly earnings from home work reported by the families included in this study correspond closely to the earnings of Pennsylvania home workers reported for the same year by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry. In 70 percent of the families in both groups, weekly returns from home work were less than $5. The median for the Pennsylvania families was $3.54 as compared with $3.17 for the families in this study. No figures showing the trend in home-work earnings under the codes could be obtained in the present study, but table 5 shows the weekly earnings of home workers reported by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry [17] for the years just prior to and following the advent of the National Recovery Administration, compared with the earnings of the workers reported in this study in 1934. In 1928 the median weekly earnings of the Pennsylvania families were $4.65; in 1932, the year before the N. R. A. codes went into effect, the median earnings were $2.83; in 1933, $3.01; and in 1934, $3.54. The gain in 1934, however, which may be attributed in part at least to the codes, was far from bringing earnings back to even the very low level of 1928.

TABLE 5.—*Percent distribution of families earning specified weekly amounts from industrial home work in Pennsylvania, 1928 and 1931–34, and in 7 States studied by the U. S. Children's Bureau, 1934*

Weekly earnings from home work	Pennsylvania				Seven States studied by U. S. Children's Bureau
	1928	1931 [1]	1933	1934	1934
Total	100	100	100	100	100
Less than $1	4	10	12	8	13
$1, less than $3	26	43	37	35	35
$3, less than $5	24	27	27	27	22
$5, less than $10	36	17	20	23	19
$10 or more	10	2	3	8	11

[1] Last 6 months of 1931.

In the 1,473 families included in the Children's Bureau study there were 916 families in which there was only one home worker. For these families it is possible to show the relation between weekly earnings and the number of hours worked (table 6). Most of the workers who were employed less than 20 hours a week earned less than $3, and it was rare that anyone made as much as $5 in less than 30 hours. As the working hours increased, however, earnings did not increase proportionately as would be expected; about the same proportion of the home workers earned between $5 and $10 a week whether they worked 30, 40, or 50 hours. Even among the group

[17] Industrial Home Work in Pennsylvania under the N. R. A., p. 27. Department of Labor and Industry, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Harrisburg, 1935. (Mimeographed.)

working 50 hours or more, 27 percent received less than $3 for their labor. So low were rates in some industries that the difference in money between a 40- and a 50-hour week was practically nothing. In one family the mother, a married daughter, and three younger children, who were 18, 15, and 14 years of age respectively, were cutting lace. The week previous to the visit the family group had worked 80 man-hours; for this amount of work they had received $5. In another family a mother and three grown daughters were making doll dresses. Their combined earnings for a typical week were $12.32, although all four sewed every minute that could be spared from household duties, from early morning until late at night, 7 days a week.

Median weekly earnings of families in each industry in which 50 or more families reported earnings are shown in the following list.

Industry	*Median weekly earnings of families*
Total	$3. 17
Knitted outerwear	1. 94
Infants' knitted garments	1. 13
Women's knitted garments	4. 96
Berets	2. 20
Lace	6. 59
Drawing threads	5. 93
Cutting lace	9. 17
Infants' and children's wear	2. 73
Art needlework	4. 04
Fresh-water pearl buttons	2. 55
Dolls and accessories	2. 44
Tags	1. 59
Gloves	9. 55
Other	3. 98

In analyzing the earnings of home workers it should be borne in mind that the actual returns were often even less than the sums reported would indicate. Low as the earnings were, they were frequently subject to costs that in factory work would be borne by the employer. Materials and findings were usually furnished, but in many instances the home workers had to buy or rent and keep in repair equipment varying in size and cost from crochet hooks to sewing machines. If power machines were used, the cost of power and upkeep was a considerable item. Loss of pay for work improperly done, charges for materials lost or spoiled, time lost in collecting, delivering, and waiting for materials, and in making samples for which no pay was received, and the cost of transportation and postage were other items of expense that frequently had to be met by the workers.

TABLE 6.—*Weekly earnings and weekly hours of home worker in families with only one person doing industrial home work*

Weekly earnings	Families with one industrial home worker												
	Weekly hours of home worker												
	Total		Less than 20		20, less than 30		30, less than 40		40, less than 50		50 or more		Not reported
	Number	Percent distribution	Number	Percent distribution	Number	Percent distribution	Number	Percent distribution	Number	Percent distribution	Number	Percent distribution	
Total	916		143		135		138		99		163		238
Earnings reported	840	100	142	100	134	100	138	100	97	100	162	100	167
Less than $1	136	16	55	39	14	10	5	4	2	2	1	1	59
$1, less than $3	315	38	63	44	62	46	61	44	34	35	43	27	52
$3, less than $5	188	22	14	10	32	24	32	23	25	26	53	33	32
$5, less than $10	142	17	8	6	21	16	29	21	21	22	41	25	22
$10, less than $15	45	5	2	1	4	3	11	8	10	10	16	10	2
$15 or more	14	2			1	1			5	5	8	5	
Earnings not reported	76		1		1				2		1		71

POSSIBILITIES OF ADJUSTMENT OF HOME WORKERS TO FACTORY EMPLOYMENT

One of the arguments advanced most frequently in defense of the home-work system is that home workers could not adjust to factory employment and would suffer unduly if deprived of their work. As the purpose of this study was to gather material that might serve as a basis for formulating future policies, it seemed desirable to make certain inquiries regarding the chief factors that might be expected to affect factory employment—the age of the home worker, her ability to speak English, and the extent to which family obligations or physical or other handicaps would prevent her working outside the home.

For the majority of the families interviewed it was found that age alone would not have interfered with factory employment. Seventy-three percent of the 2,282 home workers reporting their age were between 16 and 50 years of age, and this age distribution corresponds very closely to the age distribution of women reporting their ages who are employed in manufacturing and mechanical industries as shown in the United States Census for the year 1930. Sixty-six percent of the factory workers as compared with 60 percent of the home workers were between 20 and 50 years of age.

The group studied was not so lacking in knowledge of English as to have had great difficulty in adjusting to factory employment. In only one-fourth of the families was the chief home worker unable to speak the English language. Most of these families were French-Canadians living in northern Maine or Mexicans living in Texas. In neither locality is the inability to speak English a serious drawback. Because a large proportion of the workers in these communities are unable to speak English, it is the custom to hire factory foremen who speak their language.

Even family responsibilities were not so serious an obstacle as they are generally assumed to be. In two-thirds of the families visited either the chief home worker or some unemployed member of the family was free to take outside employment if it had been available; many of the home workers, in fact, were unmarried young people who had lost their regular jobs and were doing home work only until they could find other employment. In 349, one-third of the families reporting, however, adjustment would have been difficult. In some instances the worker was handicapped by illness or was too old to fit into the routine of the factory. In other instances her services were needed to care for a family of growing children. In only 9 percent of these families which would have found adjustment difficult, however, were there children under 1 year of age; 44 percent had children under 6 years of age. In many of the latter families it is quite probable that further investigation would have revealed possibilities of adjustment through the services of relatives, the use of day nurseries, or similar arrangements resorted to by other mothers working outside the home.

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There would always remain, it is true, an irreducible minimum of families in which the home worker could not adjust to the factory, and in which the income without home work would be insufficient for the family's support. For these the only alternative may be relief. But it must be remembered that the earnings from home work alone, even when there are several workers in the household, seldom amount to a living wage, and the returns from home work, if the family has no other sources of income such as wages from other members of the family, insurance, and savings, must usually be supplemented by relief. If the work now done in homes were brought into the plants and paid for at normal factory rates, thus eliminating the depressing effect of low home-work wages on factory wages, workers in the industry as a whole would benefit in the long run, and there would be an immediate gain in that many persons who had formerly done home work at low wage rates would be employed in factories at higher rates.

In discussing factory employment with the home workers, representatives of the United States Department of Labor were impressed with the fact that many of them were extremely anxious to find regular jobs outside the home, either in the line of work they were doing or in some other field. One mother of four children, ranging in age from 4 to 13 years, was vehement in expressing her sentiments against the practice of home work, and her opinions were held by many other mothers visited. This mother felt strongly that a system under which she was paid 10 cents an hour for work that was rated at 35 cents an hour in the factory ought not to exist, and she was eager to obtain work in the factory even though she would have to pay some one to care for her children.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Attempts to regulate industrial home work through State laws have proved ineffective. Such laws in the few States where they exist do not cover all kinds of work sent into the homes and do not apply to work sent outside the State. Even though the employer sending out the work and the worker receiving it may each live in a State having a law regulating home work, the difficulty of enforcement is obvious, as the law of the State of origin cannot follow the goods across the State line, and the law of the receiving State does not apply to the manufacturer in another State. The use of contractors as distributing agents for many manufacturers adds to the difficulties of regulation because the manufacturer is relieved of direct responsibility for his home workers and the contractor is more difficult to locate and control.

Long experience with the administration of State home-work laws has convinced State labor officials and other students of the problem that the difficulties connected with the present system of licensing home workers, inspecting homes, and attempting to regulate hours of work and child labor are insurmountable. Adequate inspection of homes would require money and personnel far beyond the resources of any State department of labor. To obtain an accurate record of the hours and wages of home workers by means of reports from employers and contractors or by an inspection of pay rolls is also a virtual impossibility.

Under the National Recovery Administration great gains were made where the codes prohibited the giving out of home work. But in the industries in which home work was still permitted, even though limited by certain regulations, the ancient evils continued to exist and to constitute a menace to the higher labor standards that had been achieved for factory workers. The great majority of the chief home workers included in this study earned less than a living wage; over half, 55 percent, made less than 10 cents an hour, and 82 percent earned less than 20 cents. Only 5 percent of the workers reporting hourly earnings made as much as the usual code minimum of 35 cents an hour. Even highly skilled work, requiring long experience, brought only meager returns. Fine embroidery on infants' and children's dresses, for example, seldom yielded the home worker more than 10 cents an hour and frequently it brought less than 5 cents an hour. Only the most expert knitters, making expensive sport costumes, earned as much as 20 cents an hour. For the simpler unskilled work, for which factory workers would receive 30 and 35 cents an hour under the code, earnings of 2 and 3 cents an hour were not unusual. Long hours and night work were

inevitable if earnings were to amount to even a pittance. It was rare to find an individual earning as much as $5 in less than 30 hours and in many of the industries women worked 50, 60, and 70 hours to earn even $3.

A few codes contained definite provisions for regulating the rate of pay to home workers; most codes, even though containing no specific provisions governing home work, implied by their definition of the term "employee" that home workers were subject to the same wages and hours as factory workers. Although in some industries piece rates to home workers have been raised to a limited extent, in none of the industries included in the study were the earnings of any large proportion of the workers found even to approximate those of factory workers. Even in the glove and lace industries, in which sincere efforts had been made to raise the level of home workers' wages, earnings were far from adequate although they were distinctly higher than in the other industries included in the study. In the glove industry, which is a well-organized trade, rates for both home workers and factory workers were set by union agreement; yet those for home workers were 10 percent below those for factory workers. In the lace industry the attempt of the code authority to set piece rates that would yield hourly minimum earnings equal to those provided in the code and to put into operation a system of records and reports to safeguard these earnings—something no other industry had done—had failed to bring the desired results. Only about one-tenth of the home workers in this industry earned the hourly minimum that it was estimated the rates set by the code authority would yield, and fully one-third made less than half that amount.

In regard to hours of work and the employment of children, again only the lace industry had made a concerted effort to regulate them, and again this effort had not succeeded. The system of reports and records put into effect by the code authority failed to accomplish the purpose and led instead to a great deal of false reporting. Of the lace workers reporting their hours almost one-fifth had worked 50 hours or more the week previous to the visit and in some instances 60, 70, and even 80 hours were reported. The same situation existed in regard to the employment of children. The efforts of the code authority had, no doubt, some effect upon the number of children employed but, nevertheless, that the terms of the agreement signed by the home workers were not being kept was evidenced by the fact that 8 percent of the home workers included in the study from this industry were under 16 years of age. This failure to regulate the hours of work and the employment of children, like the failure to raise earnings, has been due in part to the fact that piece rates have been set too low and in part—in one branch of the industry, at least—to the use of the contract system; but in general it is due to the inherent difficulties of regulating home work.

Although there is no doubt that in those industries in which the code prohibited home work some "bootlegging" went on and that unscrupulous manufacturers still made use of the

system in violation of their codes, it cannot be denied that the volume of home work greatly decreased after the prohibitions went into effect. Investigators of the United States Department of Labor, while carrying on the present study, reported that they experienced considerable difficulty in locating persons actually engaged in home work in sections where in past years they had only to walk along certain streets to see entire families absorbed in work that was later abolished under the codes.

A number of manufacturers who had brought their home workers into the factory in compliance with the provisions of the code stated in the course of their interviews with representatives of the United States Department of Labor that the difficulties of adjustment had not been so great as they had anticipated and that the advantages of having the worker on the premises were many: orders could be shipped more promptly, there was less waste, mistakes could be more readily corrected when they occurred, and above all when work was done under personal supervision more efficient methods of performing particular tasks could often be devised. These employers felt that if home work in all industries were prohibited so that no one employer had an advantage over another home work could be successfully abolished.

Part II.—INDUSTRIAL HOME WORK IN SPECIFIC INDUSTRIES

The 1,473 families interviewed during the course of the study obtained their work from firms in 28 industries. The home-work situation is discussed separately for eight industries in which 84 percent of the workers included in the study were concentrated. In three of these industries home work had been confined to specific operations; in another three a system of regulation had been established; in one, owing to the manufacturers' interpretation of the code, home work was still being distributed in one branch of the industry although the code actually prohibited home work; and in the remaining industry, although home work had been prohibited, a stay suspending the prohibition was in effect at the time of the study.

KNITTED-OUTERWEAR INDUSTRY

The knitted-outerwear industry as defined in its code included all establishments producing knitted and crocheted outerwear for men, women, children, and infants. In 1931 there were 710 firms in this industry, 400 of them located in New York State.[18] A report of the code authority [19] showed that of the 710 firms, 172 made use of the home-work system, 90 distributing directly to home workers, 50 distributing through contractors, and 32 distributing both through contractors and directly to home workers.

Home-work problem in the industry.

Because of the variety and volume of the work and because the wide geographical distribution of the workers makes control extremely difficult, home work constitutes a major problem in the knitted-outerwear industry. According to the reports of the code authority, at the time of the study manufacturers of knitted outerwear were employing almost 17,000 home workers located in 29 States. The increasing popularity of knitted dresses and berets during recent years has encouraged home work in this industry. In Pennsylvania, where comparable figures showing the number of home workers in the State are available year by year, reports show that the knitted-outerwear industry is the only industry in the State in which the number of home workers had increased constantly during the depression years. Approximately 800 home workers from this industry were registered with that department in 1928, and in 1934 the number exceeded 2,700.[20]

Home work was prevalent in three branches of the knitted-outerwear industry: infants' hand-made garments, hand-made headwear, and women's hand-made garments. Hand seaming of machine-made garments was also done in the home, but as it was less common than the other types of work it was found in only a few instances in the

[18] Biennial Census of Manufactures, 1931, pp. 269–270. U. S. Bureau of the Census, Washington, 1935.
[19] Report No. X of the Home Work Bureau, Knitted-Outerwear Code Authority, under Order No. 164–36 approved February 4, 1935, p. 72. (Mimeographed.)
[20] Industrial Homework in Pennsylvania under the N. R. A., p. 6. Department of Labor and Industry, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Harrisburg, 1935. (Mimeographed.)

course of this study. In the hand-knitting branches of this industry very little of the manufacture is done in the factory; the inside work for the most part is confined to samples used for display purposes or used as models for home workers to copy. Home work on infants' garments consisted chiefly of crocheting baby sacques or sweaters, bootees, leggings, and caps, and sometimes included embroidering simple designs on those articles; home work on headwear consisted of crocheting women's and children's berets; and home work on women's garments of knitting women's dresses, blouses, and sweaters.

Home workers in the headwear and women's garments branches of the industry were concentrated for the most part in metropolitan areas, but those in the infants' knitted-wear branch of the industry were recruited in large numbers from small towns and rural districts, often at great distances from the distributing center. It is doubtful if the manufacturers in any other industry, except perhaps infants' and children's wear, sent as much work to rural communities as the manufacturers of infants' knitted wear sent. A large proportion of the firms in this industry were located in New York City, where the provisions of the State home-work law prohibited work on infants' clothing in tenements.[21] New York manufacturers, therefore, sent their work to small towns and rural districts in order to be free from local restrictions. One firm alone, which employed several thousand home workers, sent work to 600 communities. In one small town in Maine, which has a population of approximately 3,500, it was reported that work was being sent in by mail from 27 New York and Philadelphia firms. A framed sign, listing the names and addresses of several New York manufacturers that gave out such work, hung in the lobby of the only public building in the town.

Home-work provisions of the code.

The code for the knitted-outerwear industry, which became effective January 1, 1934, prohibited home work in some branches of the industry but permitted it to continue on hand knitting, hand crocheting, hand embroidering, and the hand joining of machine-made parts of garments for the period of 1 year, that is until January 1, 1935, if performed in accordance with regulations and piece rates which were to be established. It provided further for the appointment of a committee for the hand-knitting division of the industry to recommend minimum piece-work rates and also to study the home-work situation and report to the National Recovery Administration within 6 months on the practicability of either discontinuing home work altogether or setting up a system of control.

This committee was duly appointed and submitted its recommendations; hearings were held, but no action was taken as a result of its report until February 1935. At that time, by an administrative order, the National Recovery Administration authorized the continuance of home work in hand-knitting operations until April 1, 1935, and appointed a home-work commission to investigate further, to study home work in the industry, and to supervise the code authority's administration of home-work regulations. The order further approved a system of home-work regulation that had been submitted by the code authority and the establishment of a home-work bureau

[21] The New York home-work law as revised in 1935 (ch. 182) no longer includes children's or infants' wearing apparel in the list of articles on which home work is prohibited.

at the code authority's headquarters. This bureau was to enforce the regulation and to gather data for the home-work commission, which had been instructed by the National Recovery Administration to classify all home-work garments and products in the industry and to recommend standards for minimum piece rates. Under the system of regulations put into effect, manufacturers and contractors were to file written assent to the regulations, manufacturers were obliged to register their contractors and home workers, and contractors were required to report the names of their employers. Home-work payroll records were to be kept available for inspection for a period of 6 months, and records of all other transactions relative to home work were to be open to inspection by the home-work commission or the home-work bureau at all times. Employers were further required to file such information as might be called for at any time.

On February 27, 1935, a further stay of the code prohibition of home work was granted until May 15, 1935, in order to give the home-work commission further time to make its study. At the time the N. R. A. codes became invalid, home work was still being given out under the same conditions as before the establishment of the National Recovery Administration, and home-work rates were still unregulated.

Hours of work.

Many manufacturers contended that hand-crocheted and hand-knitted articles could not be made in the factory because workers would not be able to concentrate on work of this type for any prolonged period. It was found, however, that for a large number of the home workers included in the study a working week of 40, 48, or even 50 hours or more was not uncommon. Although it is true that a few of the workers interviewed were elderly women who did home work to "fill in their leisure hours," a much larger number were women under 50 years of age and young people who made home work a full-time job. In Maine the home workers were the wives and daughters of farmers, lumbermen, and fishermen living in villages where there were few opportunities for regular employment. There the young girls take up crocheting and knitting as soon as they leave school, just as city girls seek store, office, and factory employment. Many of them are expected as a matter of course to earn their own clothes in this way, and after marriage they continue the work in order to help with family expenses.

Almost two-thirds of the chief home workers from whom information was obtained regarding their hours of work reported a working week of 30 hours or more, and two-fifths had worked at least as long as and often considerably longer than the 40-hour week provided by the code (table 7). The shortest working week was reported by women crocheting infants' garments, but even in this group one-half of the women had worked as much as 30 hours and almost one-fourth had worked 40 hours or more in the week previous to the interview. The longest working week was reported by home workers on women's knitted garments. Almost three-fourths had worked at least the code week of 40 hours; more than half had worked at least 50 hours; and more than one-fourth had worked 70 hours or more. Long hours were more prevalent in connection with women's knitted garments than

with any other kind of work included in the study. The median hours reported for this work were 56.9. It was not at all unusual to have women engaged in this work tell of working until 1, and even 2 o'clock in the morning, putting in their best hours after the children were in bed. As one woman expressed it, they "knit all day and straight into the night."

TABLE 7.—*Weekly hours of chief home workers in the knitted-outerwear industry*

Weekly hours of chief home worker	Knitted-outerwear industry								
	Total		Infants' knitted garments		Women's knitted garments		Berets		Other
	Number	Percent distribution	Number	Percent distribution	Number	Percent distribution	Number	Percent distribution	
Total families	454		219		117		101		17
Hours reported	298	100	117	100	77	100	92	100	12
Less than 20 hours	64	21	35	30	3	4	24	26	2
20 hours, less than 30	50	17	23	20	2	3	23	25	2
30 hours, less than 40	62	21	31	26	16	21	14	15	1
40 hours, less than 50	43	14	17	15	12	16	12	13	2
50 hours, less than 60	22	7	2	2	8	10	9	10	3
60 hours, less than 70	24	8	5	4	14	18	4	4	1
70 hours or more	33	11	4	3	22	29	6	7	1
Hours not reported	156		102		40		9		5

Earnings.

Rates of pay.—The home work operations on knitted outerwear demand skill and experience, particularly in the knitted sportswear branch of the industry, yet in all branches piece rates were extremely low. The range in rates for the different kinds of work in this study is shown in the following list:

Article	*Range in rate*
Infants' garments (crocheted):	
Summer sets (sacque, bootees, and cap)—per dozen sets	$2.00–$6.00
Winter sets (sweater, leggings, and cap)—do	5.00–10.00
Bootees only—per dozen pairs	.20– 1.50
Caps—per dozen	.50– 1.25
Sweaters—do	1.25– 4.00
Women's knitted garments:	
Skirts—each	3.00–10.00
Blouses or sweaters—do	2.50– 8.00
Berets (crocheted)—do	.35– 2.75

The rate of pay for all work varied with the quality of the yarn, the intricacy of the design, and to some extent with the size of the garment, extra-large or extra-long sizes bringing a slightly higher rate.

Hourly earnings.—The minimum hourly wage provided by the code of the knitted-outerwear industry for the least skilled workers exclusive of learners was 35 cents an hour, yet only 8 of the 296 chief home workers reporting hourly earnings for this type of work made even 20 cents an hour (table 8).

TABLE 8.—*Hourly earnings of chief home workers in the knitted-outerwear industry*

Hourly earnings of chief home worker	Knitted-outerwear industry								
	Total		Infants' knitted garments		Women's knitted garments		Berets		Other
	Number	Percent distribution	Number	Percent distribution	Number	Percent distribution	Number	Percent distribution	
Total families	454		219		117		101		17
Earnings reported	296	100	116	100	77	100	91	100	12
Less than 5 cents	99	33	78	67	3	4	17	19	1
5 cents, less than 10	134	45	32	28	40	52	59	65	3
10 cents, less than 15	47	16	4	3	23	30	13	14	7
15 cents, less than 20	8	3	1	1	6	8			1
20 cents, less than 25	3	1			2	3	1	1	
25 cents, less than 30	3	1			2	3	1	1	
30 cents, less than 35									
35 cents, less than 40	1	(1)			1	1			
40 cents or more	1	(1)	1	1					
Earnings not reported	158		103		40		10		5

[1] Less than 1 percent.

Although earnings varied considerably in the different branches of the industry, they were incredibly low in all. Home workers engaged in crocheting infants' garments reported the lowest earnings in any industry of the study. Of 116 chief home workers reporting earnings from infants' garments, only 6 made as much as 10 cents an hour. Fully two-thirds earned less than 5 cents and almost half no more than 3 cents. For the majority of the workers crocheting berets, the earnings of the chief home worker were between 5 and 10 cents an hour, and only two workers made as much as 15 cents. Earnings from women's knitted garments were somewhat higher, but, with one exception, this work probably required the most sk l of all the work included in the study. Only 11 of the 77 chief home workers reporting their earnings from women's knitted garments made as much as 15 cents an hour.

Weekly earnings.—Weekly earnings were correspondingly low. In only 18 families were the total weekly earnings from home work on knitted and crocheted outerwear as much as $7.50; in almost two-thirds of the families they were less than $3; and in approximately one-fourth they were less than $1 (table 9). The median weekly earnings from women's knitted garments, the most remunerative work in the industry, were only $4.96; for crocheted berets they were $2.20; and for infants' garments $1.13. The median earnings for the entire industry were $1.94.

TABLE 9.—*Weekly earnings of families from home work in the knitted-outerwear industry*

Weekly earnings of families	Knitted-outerwear industry								
	Total		Infants' knitted garments		Women's knitted garments		Berets		Other
	Number	Percent distribution	Number	Percent distribution	Number	Percent distribution	Number	Percent distribution	
Total	454		219		117		101		17
Earnings reported	402	100	182	100	105	100	99	100	16
Less than $1	98	24	81	45			15	15	2
$1, less than $2	109	27	77	42			29	29	3
$2, less than $3	49	12	12	7	5	5	28	28	4
$3, less than $4	32	8	8	4	13	12	11	11	
$4, less than $5	46	11	2	1	36	34	8	8	
$5, less than $7.50	50	12	1	1	36	34	8	8	5
$7.50, less than $10	9	2			8	8			1
$10, less than $15	9	2	1	1	7	7			1
$15, less than $20									
$20 or more									
Earnings not reported	52		37		12		2		1

One woman, who was engaged in knitting women's sport dresses and whose family earnings of $6 a week were above the average, reported that she usually began working about 6 a. m. and knit every minute she could spare from her housework until 10 p. m. In addition she knit "some" every Sunday. If she did not work on Sunday she would have to "knit half through the night." Her 20-year old daughter did no housework but knit almost steadily from 6 a. m. to 10 p. m. The girl did not usually work Saturday night but always knit "some" on Sunday. Her earnings the week previous to the visit were $4.

Another woman, interviewed at a time when she was engaged on a rush order, gave the following description of the conditions under which she was working. On the Thursday previous to the visit she had been sent material for a pair of chenille sweater fronts for which she would receive $2.50 when completed. She knit a sample Thursday night and sent it to the factory Friday morning. It was approved and returned that afternoon. She worked until 10 p. m. Friday night, most of the day Saturday and Sunday, and until 2 a. m. Monday. She arose at 6 a. m., cooked breakfast, but did no other housework, and when she was seen at 10 a. m. she had almost completed one front. She was extremely worried because she had been given orders to complete both fronts by Monday night.

A number of the women visited had kept records of their weekly earnings over a period of several months. The figures below were copied from the records of a woman who knit sweaters and of one who crocheted berets, both of them known in the neighborhood as rapid workers. Although no information is available on the number of garments in each assignment or on the number of hours and days spent working on each assignment, the figures are significant in considering workers' total earnings from home work.

Knitted sweaters	*Earnings from each assignment*
Date assignment was received:	
Jan. 26	[1] $2. 98
Mar. 26	4. 25
Apr. 6	5. 00
Apr. 13	[1] 5. 48
Apr. 26	[1] 4. 98
May 5	[1] 4. 98
May 10	[1] 4. 98
May 19	5. 00
May 28	5. 00
May 31	5. 00
June 6	[1] 4. 98
June 29	[1] 5. 73
July 10	[1] 4. 25
July 18	4. 50
Aug. 16	[1] 5. 23

Crocheted berets	*Earnings from each assignment*
Date assignment was received:	
June 14	$0. 70
June 15	. 70
June 16	. 70
June 18	. 70
June 19	. 70
Aug. 25	1. 75
Aug. 27	. 70
Aug. 29	1. 75
Aug. 29	. 70
Aug. 31	1. 75
Sept. 1	. 70
Sept. 4	. 70
Sept. 5	. 70
Sept. 7	. 70
Sept. 8	. 70

[1] 2 cents deduction for tax on check paid to workers.

Charges and deductions.

Many complaints were received from home workers on women's knitted garments and infants' garments in particular regarding expenditures their work involved which often reduced their earnings considerably. In Maine the most frequent complaints were of the cost of shipping. Some of the manufacturers paid postage only one way and the worker was obliged to pay it the other way. At the time of the study, August 1934, only one or two firms were paying insurance on work returned. Some firms had even issued definite instructions not to insure work. Home workers had learned, however, either from their own or another person's experience, that they had no redress if consignments were lost in the mail or in the receiving department of the factory and that they usually had to refund the cost of the yarn or lose all chance of further work. Even if they were not required to pay for the yarn, they lost pay for the work done. As completed work was seldom acknowledged except by a check in payment, which arrived from 2 weeks to several months after the work was mailed, many workers were unwilling to take the risk of returning articles uninsured. One worker reported that postage and insurance on six sweater sets for which she was paid $2 cost her 24 cents, 12 percent of her earnings.

Workers in Maine complained also that they were sometimes charged unfairly for yarn. It was the practice of most of the firms in the knitted-outerwear industry to take an annual inventory of stock in January just before style changes were made. At that time home workers were required to return all yarn and garments in their possession, and if the factory's record of the amount of goods returned during the year did not check with the record of the amount of yarn issued the home worker was held responsible. One firm even threatened legal action if restitution were not made. If the worker did not "make good" she received no more work.

Many families reported considerable delay in receiving their pay, and some failed to receive it at all. One family reported that they waited exactly 1 year before they received a check for $8 due them for several consignments of work sent in at various times. A woman had failed to receive $3.50 due her, although she had been waiting for more than a year and had written some 15 letters in regard to it. The firm had acknowledged receipt of the work but had given no

reason for not paying. A third worker had failed to receive a payment of $7 for two shipments of work. She had written several times regarding it, but the firm had replied to the first letter only, telling her that they were not obligated to pay but giving no reason.

From the women knitting dresses, complaints were heard frequently in regard to unfair charges for spoilage, time spent in doing over work and making samples for which no compensation was received, and the cost of calling for and returning work and samples. As these workers were handling expensive materials, they were generally required to make a deposit before they were allowed to take work from the factory or, if they could not spare a cash outlay, payment for the first garment was withheld as a deposit. The value of this deposit ranged from $2.50 to $10. If the work done was not acceptable to the factory, the worker was required to ravel the garment and knit it again. If she refused on the grounds that the mistake was not hers, she not only lost pay for the work done but sometimes lost her deposit as well. Workers claimed that mistakes were often due to the failure of the employer to give correct and full instructions.

Because of the variations in styles and the intricacy of the various stitches and designs, home workers knitting women's garments were required to submit samples of their work before they were allowed to make a complete garment. It was not unusual for a worker to submit three, four, and even five samples before her work was approved. As no pay was received for rejected samples, a great deal of time was lost in this way. According to the workers interviewed, it usually took from 1 to 2 hours to make a sample. One woman, who had had a number of years' experience in knitting dresses, reported that for the dress she had just completed she had made five samples before one was accepted. She said that this represented 1 week's work for which she received no pay and that her failure to do the work satisfactorily was due to the fact that she had been instructed merely as to the number of stitches per inch but not as to the size of the needles to be used. Other women complained that even after samples had been approved completed garments were often refused and had to be raveled and reknit.

Sometimes firms accepted work that they said was not made according to instructions, agreeing to pay for it later if they were able to sell it. However, none of the workers interviewed who had been told this had heard anything further concerning the garments. One woman interviewed reported that she had had three garments "confiscated" during the past year. Others who reported the same experience added that they were not shown the garment after it was rejected. "They never show you; they just tell you." One firm visited during the course of the study required its home workers to sign a statement containing among others the following provision:

> I agree to do over any work that is poorly done or [name of firm] may pay me for poor work any amount less than the regular price. If work already paid for is found to be unsatisfactory and I refuse to do the work over, [name of firm] may deduct the amount paid for this work from the next pay voucher.

Complaints regarding time lost from work in going to and from the factory and regarding the cost of transportation were made by home workers in metropolitan areas. Usually new work was obtained when finished work was returned, but if samples had to be submitted, as in the case of knitted sportswear, it meant several trips for each

garment. Reports were that it took from 1½ to 3 hours to reach the factory, get worked checked, and return home, so that practically one-half day was lost each trip. Because of the time consumed in making these trips, many workers found it more profitable to pay some one to deliver and to collect their work for them. In one neighborhood the workers had clubbed together and hired a man to make deliveries for the group. Each worker paid 40 cents for the collection and delivery of each garment, this price to include the necessary trips to submit samples and, when necessary, to procure extra yarn. If many trips had to be made, however, an additional 15 cents was charged. One worker reported that she had had to pay delivery charges amounting to 55 cents on a garment for which she received $5.50.

Interstate shipment of home work.

Conditions in the knitted-outerwear industry illustrate clearly the difficulties involved in attempting to control industrial home work when it is sent across State lines. These difficulties arise because the State in which the work is done has no jurisdiction over the employer, and the employer is the only person who can be held responsible for the home work. Furthermore, when all transactions between employer and worker take place by mail it is difficult to obtain any reliable check on the conditions under which the work is done or even to know where the home workers are located. For example, reports of the New York Department of Labor showed that in the last registration manufacturers of infants' crocheted wear in the State had filed registers of home workers containing as many as 12,000 and 21,000 names for each firm. Agents of the United States Department of Labor, however, in making this study of home work in Maine, found that the registration was not an accurate census. In order to secure enough work to keep themselves regularly employed, women were obtaining orders under four or five names and from as many different firms. Neighbors, friends, relatives, and even a 3-year-old child were receiving consignments from New York firms and turning them over to the actual home worker.

LACE-MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY

The lace-manufacturing industry includes 41 mills, located for the most part in New England and the Middle Atlantic States: Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. According to information furnished by the code authority, about half of these mills made use of home workers. Only finishing processes were done in the homes; some firms specialized in a type of lace on which the finishing processes were not adapted to home work, and some did not finish their own product but sent it to other mills or to jobbers to be finished.

Three lace-manufacturing centers were visited in the course of the study: Providence, R. I., New York City with neighboring New Jersey cities, and Long Island. Two hundred and seventeen families of 425 home workers were interviewed. In Providence, R. I., in the New Jersey cities, and on Long Island most of the home workers obtained their work directly from the mill. In New York the distribution was almost entirely through contractors.

Home-work problem in the industry.

Three kinds of home work are found in connection with the manufacture of lace: thread drawing, scalloping or cutting, and mending. Lace edgings and insertions come from the loom in the form of a web, usually 6 yards wide and 36 yards long, the bands of edgings or insertions held together by one or two connecting threads. As many as 300 bands may make up one web. To separate these the connecting threads must be drawn. Wider lace edgings that have deep or decided scallops and lace yokes and medallions [22] have to be cut from the web with scissors. This process is called cutting or scalloping. Mending, as the name implies, consists of correcting the flaws that occur in the weaving. This work was found only once in the course of the study.

Probably most of the wider edgings and the lace yokes and medallions put on the market are sold to manufacturers in the web, and by far the greater part of the work sent into the home consists of thread drawing. This was practically the only kind of work being done in Rhode Island and on Long Island. In New York most of the work was scalloping, and in New Jersey both kinds of work were being done.

Home work in the lace industry has always been marked by the employment of children. Thread drawing is simple work, requiring nimble fingers but no skill, and even very young children can do it. Scalloping is not generally entrusted to young children, but children can assist with the work by counting the pieces and pinning them in bundles. In the present study 8 percent of the lace workers were under 16 years of age. In a survey made in Providence by the United States Women's Bureau 6 months earlier, 17 percent of the workers were under 16 years, and in a similar study made in Connecticut prior to the establishment of the N. R. A. codes about 50 percent were under that age. The efforts of the code authority to eliminate child labor undoubtedly have brought about some reduction in the number of children employed. There is reason to believe, however, that the difference in the numbers reported in the three studies can be accounted for mostly by the fact that the families interviewed in the later studies were less frank in reporting their use of children.

Home-work regulations in the industry.

The lace-manufacturing industry offered the best example of an attempt to regulate home work of all the industries included in the study. Although the code for the lace-manufacturing industry contained no specific provision governing home work,[23] as many other codes did, the definition of the term "employee" was such as to include home workers, and the code authority had made a conscientious effort to see that this group of workers received the benefits of the code provisions. The first step in this direction was to establish piece rates, which, it was believed, would yield the workers the code wage of 32½ cents an hour or $13 for a 40-hour week. To obtain

[22] Used largely for trimming underwear.

[23] In March 1934 a proposal was submitted by the Labor Advisory Board, at a hearing of the lace-manufacturing industry before the National Recovery Administration, to abolish home work by May 1, 1934. This proposal was not accepted; the industry argued against abolition, asserting that home work could be regulated and the provisions of the code enforced.

data to be used as the basis for determining piece rates, every mill distributing home work was instructed to bring 10 percent of the home workers, of average ability, into the factory for a period of 1 week and to record their speed. The piece rates set as a result of these tests were, in some instances, three or four times as high as the former rates.

In an attempt to prevent the employment of children, to regulate hours of work, and further to safeguard earnings, an agreement was drawn up by the American Lace Manufacturers' Association, which each home worker was required to sign. In this agreement the home worker promised that she would do the work herself; that no child under 16 years of age would be allowed to assist; that if she employed assistants each would sign the agreement; that her home would be kept clean and free from disease and open to inspection at certain specified hours during the day; that she would not accept work at a rate yielding less than 32½ cents an hour; and that she would not work more than 40 hours a week even though she worked for more than one manufacturer. In order that there might be no misunderstanding regarding this agreement, letters explaining its conditions were written in five languages and were sent to all home workers in the industry by the code authority.

All manufacturers and contractors distributing home work were required to obtain weekly receipts from each home worker showing the kind and amount of work done, the number of hours worked, and the pay received; and to file with the code authority each week certified copies of their pay rolls containing the names and addresses of home workers and the number of hours each one worked. Manufacturers distributing through contractors were required to register the names and addresses of all such agents.

Hours of work and earnings.

The attempt of the code authority to safeguard the hours and earnings of home workers through a system of receipts and reports did not work out as intended but led, instead, to much false reporting. Workers very generally reported that the receipts they signed were seldom correct; that the hours reported were not those actually worked but represented the number resulting from the division of their earnings by the specified hourly rate of 32½ cents. Sometimes the hours of work were already entered when the receipt was presented for signature. Sometimes the work arrived at the house of the home worker with a tag attached, on which was marked the estimated number of hours required to complete the assignment; this was the number of hours the worker was requested to report. "They mark; you sign," was the statement heard in one form or another from one worker after another.

Furthermore it was found that many more persons helped with the work than the company's books showed. In some families there were as many as four or more home workers, although only one had signed the agreement and the name of only one appeared on the pay roll. Thus the earnings receipted for as those of one person were often the earnings of several. One home worker interviewed remarked, "To make $113 a week means working until 11 o'clock at night, and it takes everyone's help." The findings of this study corroborate her statement. Although home-work wages in the lace

industry had been raised above the level of home-work wages in most industries, they were still far from equaling factory wages.

The study made in Rhode Island by the United States Women's Bureau in April and May 1934, a few months after piece rates for thread drawing had been established by the industry, first indicated that the attempts to regulate home work in this industry were not bringing the desired results. That study, however, was made when the code authority was just beginning to get under way with its program of regulation. When the present study was made, 6 months later, the same locality was visited and many of the same families were interviewed in the belief that with a longer period allowed for adjustment the experiment might show different results. Both studies, however, revealed the same conditions. In both, the families interviewed were almost unanimous in their contention that piece rates had been set too low and that few home workers were able to earn the hourly rates expected of them. They asserted that the workers taken into the factory for speed tests were not the average but the best workers and that more operations were demanded of the home worker than of the factory worker for the same rate of pay, as home workers were required to return the lace folded and tied or, in the case of pattern pieces, counted and bunched, whereas factory workers merely dropped each piece in a basket as the work was completed. In connection with thread drawing it was said that the poorer grades of lace, from which it takes much longer to pull the connecting threads, were being sent into the homes and the better grades reserved for factory workers who could not so easily camouflage their hours of work and that quality had not been considered in setting rates. Many workers reported that they could "pull" a band (36 yards) in a few minutes if the lace were very good, but that it often took an hour to pull the same amount if it were poor.

Hours of work.—A little more than one-third, 34 percent, of the chief home workers who reported hours of work had worked at least the maximum hours fixed by the code authority (40) the week previous to the study and 27 percent had exceeded that limit. Almost one-fifth, 17 percent, reported 50 hours or more. Excessively long hours were reported more frequently by workers engaged in cutting than by those drawing threads; 29 percent of those who cut lace compared with 7 percent of those who drew threads had worked 50 hours or more.

Night work was usual among all the home workers whatever their total weekly hours of work. The practice of distributing the work late in the afternoon and requiring that it be completed and ready for collection the following day—a practice common to many home-work industries—was general throughout the lace industry. Reports from home workers that they had to work late into the night, even to 1, 2, and 3 a. m., in order to finish work on time were heard often enough to be expected as a matter of course. One woman said that she kept at work so steadily that all she could see when she looked up from her work was "little holes like in net."

Rates of pay.—The minimum piece rates established by the code authority for home-work operations on lace were uniform, of course, for all manufacturers operating under the code. For thread drawing the rate was 12 cents per gross yards for bands held together with a single thread, and 18 cents per gross yards for bands held by a double

thread. For cutting there was a much wider variation, the rates ranging from 60 cents per gross yards for lace edgings to $1.80 per gross yards for lace more than 5 inches wide with complicated "cut-outs" on each side.

All the firms interviewed reported that they raised their rates after the code became effective and that at the time of the study they were paying at least the equivalent of the rates fixed by the code authority. Because of the great variation in styles and the different units used in quoting rates, this statement could not be verified for lace cutting. However, in thread drawing it was found that all but two of the firms were paying the rates set by the code authority. Of these two firms, one was paying a higher rate, 16 cents per gross yards for single thread and 20 cents for double thread; the other, instead of paying a different rate for each process, had set a rate for both processes halfway between the two code rates.

Hourly earnings.—The hourly earnings of the chief home workers in families engaged in cutting and drawing threads on lace are shown in table 10. For most of the workers, earnings from either cutting or drawing threads did not even approximate the 32½-cent minimum set by the code authority. The median for lace cutting was 18 cents and for thread drawing 19 cents an hour. Only 19 percent of all the lace workers earned as much as 30 cents an hour.

Returns from cutting were fairly uniform from day to day, but complaints were almost unanimous from the workers drawing threads that their earnings depended to a large extent on the quality of the lace that fell to their lot. In lace that is woven too tightly or that is too heavily starched the threads break frequently and do not pull easily. If the lace were exceptionally good, a worker might earn as much as 45 cents an hour, and if it were poor, she might make only 9 cents, 6 cents, and even 4 cents an hour. One family reported having received such "bad" lace on one occasion that four of them, working together all afternoon and until midnight, earned only 28 cents.

TABLE 10.—*Hourly earnings of chief home workers in the lace industry*

Hourly earnings of chief home worker	Lace industry					
	Total		Drawing threads		Cutting	
	Number	Percent distribution	Number	Percent distribution	Number	Percent distribution
Total families	217		124		93	
Earnings reported	188	100	103	100	85	100
Less than 5 cents	2	1			2	2
5 cents, less than 10	28	15	12	12	16	19
10 cents, less than 15	34	18	21	20	13	15
15 cents, less than 20	44	23	24	23	20	24
20 cents, less than 25	26	14	16	16	10	12
25 cents, less than 30	18	10	9	9	9	11
30 cents, less than 35	21	11	12	12	9	11
35 cents, less than 40	8	4	6	6	2	2
40 cents or more	7	4	3	3	4	5
Earnings not reported	29		21		8	

Although the hourly earnings reported by the home workers in this industry fell far short of the standard to which the code authority had sought to raise them, when compared with home-work earnings in most of the industries included in the study they were high. Forty-three percent of the chief home workers in the lace industry as compared with 19 percent of the chief home workers in all industries earned 20 cents an hour or more. In the glove industry, however, hourly earnings were somewhat higher than in the lace industry; 43 percent of the glove workers as compared to 4 percent of the lace workers reported earnings of 40 cents an hour or more. In no other industry except the glove industry were earnings even approximately as high as in the lace industry.

Weekly earnings.—The median weekly earnings of families in the lace industry were $6.59. Returns from lace cutting were considerably higher than those from thread drawing, 49 percent of the cutters as compared with 22 percent of the thread drawers having reported weekly earnings of $10 or more (table 11). At the time of the study lace cutting could be obtained with greater regularity than thread drawing, which probably accounts for the higher earnings among the cutters. Almost twice as large a proportion of the families of the cutters as of the thread drawers reported a full 6- or 7-day week. Of the chief home workers 19 percent of the cutters as compared with 3 percent of the thread drawers had worked 60 hours or more the week previous to the visit.

TABLE 11.—*Weekly earnings of families from home work in the lace industry*

Weekly earnings of families	Lace industry					
	Total		Drawing threads		Cutting	
	Number	Percent distribution	Number	Percent distribution	Number	Percent distribution
Total families	217		124		93	
Earnings reported	204	100	116	100	88	100
Less than $1	7	3	4	3	3	3
$1, less than $2	6	3	4	3	2	2
$2, less than $3	26	13	16	14	10	11
$3, less than $4	12	6	9	8	3	3
$4, less than $5	25	12	15	13	10	11
$5, less than $7.50	41	20	27	23	14	16
$7.50, less than $10	19	9	16	14	3	3
$10, less than $15	44	22	22	19	22	25
$15, less than $20	16	8	3	3	13	15
$20 or more	8	4			8	9
Earnings not reported	13		8		5	

The comparatively higher weekly earnings for home workers in the lace industry were due in part to higher piece rates but in part to the fact that in 60 percent of the families working on lace there were at least two home workers and in 22 percent there were three or more. How the amounts that appeared on the weekly pay roll as the earnings of one home worker were often earned is shown by the following remark made by one of the workers: "No lady can pull lace to get $13 in 40 hours. Last week I got $13, but it was for

2 weeks and for the work of two ladies." The name of only one of the "ladies" appeared on the pay roll. Her share of the $13 was $9, but she had earned it with the assistance of her husband and two boys, aged 11 and 14 years, who, with herself, constituted one of the two "ladies."

In 87 of the families visited who were working on lace there was only one home worker. For 72 of these workers it is possible to show the difference between the hours they actually worked and the number of hours that they would have worked to earn the weekly amounts reported if prevailing piece rates had yielded the earnings estimated by the code authority. Allowing 1 hour's leeway it was found that only 15 of the 72 workers had been able to maintain a rate of speed that would yield the expected hourly earnings of 32½ cents, and 57 worked much longer. Of the latter, 25 had worked more than twice the hours expected and 15 had worked one and a half times as many hours.

INFANTS' AND CHILDREN'S WEAR INDUSTRY

The infants' and children's wear industry includes manufacturers of a great variety of children's apparel, from infants' clothing to that of boys and girls 14 years of age. Not all manufacturers of infants' and children's clothing operated under the infants' and children's wear code, however. Because some firms, manufacturers of infants' knitted outerwear, for example, were already operating under other codes at the time the code for this industry was established, and because in some firms more important items of production [24] made operation under another code preferable, manufacturers of infants' and children's wear were given considerable latitude in electing the industry-group with which they wished to affiliate. Only firms operating under the infants' and children's wear code were included in the study as representative of the industry.

Manufacturers of infants' and children's wear are located principally in the Eastern States—in New York, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, New Jersey, and Massachusetts—but there are also substantial manufacturing centers in about 30 other States, as far south as Texas, as far west as California, and as far north as Michigan and Maine. Because much of the work done outside the factory in the Eastern States is sent to homes in scattered communities difficult to locate, the city chosen for the study of home work in the industry was San Antonio, Tex., an important southern center where home workers are concentrated in the immediate locality. This city was also of interest because an exemption from the minimum-wage provision of the code had been granted to local manufacturers in that district permitting a minimum hourly rate of 20 cents for factory workers and requiring piece rates for home workers to be computed on this basis. It was thought desirable, therefore, to ascertain how this regulation was being observed.

One hundred and thirty-eight families from this industry, including 232 home workers, were interviewed in the course of the study. Practically all these workers were receiving work from San Antonio firms.[25]

[24] Manufacturers in this industry do not usually specialize in garments of one type or size.

[25] Seven of the families doing home work on infants' and children's wear were located in New York City and in Newark, N. J., and were interviewed in the course of visits to workers in other industries.

Home-work problem in the industry.

The home-work system has always been used extensively in the infants' and children's wear industry and at the time of the study this industry probably ranked second only to the knitted-outerwear industry in the number of home workers employed. In 1932, according to the code authority, there were approximately 23,000 home workers in the industry, constituting over one-fourth of the total number of employees.

In the Eastern States the home-work problem of this industry is like that of the knitted-outerwear industry. In both industries home work was prohibited at the time of this study [26] in tenements in New York State, and New York City manufacturers (who constitute a large proportion of the employers in this industry) were sending their work into other cities and States, sometimes at long distances. In both industries, also, a large part of the work was being given out through contractors. In San Antonio the situation was somewhat different. Most of the work was being given out to families in the immediate locality and directly to the home workers. Contractors were being used by only a few firms and only for the small part of the work that was sent outside the city.

The home-work operations on infants' and children's wear consisted of hand work of all kinds and some machine sewing.[27] The hand processes included not only decorating—embroidering, hemstitching, and smocking—but often the seaming and hemming of the garment as well. The work varied in the degree of skill required but much of it was fine and exquisite. All seaming was French seaming and only the daintiest stitching was accepted. The designs were necessarily small and therefore trying to the eyes.

Five infants' and children's wear firms were located in San Antonio, drawn there from the East by the abundant supply of cheap Mexican labor. One of these firms was a branch of a New York firm; the others were local concerns. With the exception of one firm, which employed 134 factory workers, they were comparatively small, the number of inside workers varying from 9 to 30. At the time of the study practically all hand processes were being done outside the factory. Before the advent of the National Recovery Administration some of this work was done in the factory, but with the increase in factory wages under the codes it was transferred to home workers.

Practically all the home workers included in the study who made infants' and children's clothes were Mexican. As would be expected with such highly skilled work, most of the workers were older girls and women. Nevertheless, 12 children under 16 years of age, 5 of whom had not yet reached their fourteenth birthday, were found engaged in this work.

Home-work provisions of the code.

The infants' and children's wear code, which became effective April 9, 1934, provided that no machine sewing should be done in the home but allowed home work on hand processes to continue. It paved the way, however, for the regulation of the home work that continued, by providing that within 6 months (that is by Oct. 9, 1934), the code authority should recommend to the National Recovery

[26] The New York home-work law as revised in 1935 (ch. 182) no longer includes children's or infants' wearing apparel in the list of articles on which home work is prohibited.
[27] In violation of the code prohibition.

Administrator appropriate means for the control of home work in the industry.

Soon after the code was adopted in May 1934 several Texas firms, including four of the five located in San Antonio, were granted an exemption from the minimum-wage provision, permitting them to pay a minimum rate of 20 cents per hour; i. e., a rate lower by 10 cents than the southern differential specified in the code, which permitted manufacturers to pay a weekly rate of $8 for 40 hours' work. This exemption was granted, however, on condition that home workers receive the same rate of pay as factory workers. Furthermore, these firms were required to submit to the National Recovery Administrator within 30 days plans for the regulation of home work in their factories. At the time of the study no plan had been adopted for regulation of any kind.

Hours of work.

In only one other industry included in the study—women's knitted garments—were excessively long working hours reported so generally as in the infants' and children's wear industry. A working week of 50, 60, and even 70 hours was not uncommon. Of 122 chief home workers, from whom information was obtained regarding their hours of work the previous week, almost two-thirds had worked the 40-hour code week or longer, while one-third had worked at least 60 hours, and almost one-fifth, 70 or more. The median hours of the chief home workers in this industry were 48 as compared with 34 for all workers included in the study. In most Mexican households visited, young girls who were not otherwise employed were expected to work at least factory hours and frequently much longer at home work. In one typical family, two girls 22 and 28 years of age averaged 12 hours a day, 5 days a week, embroidering infants' garments. On Saturday they had "4 hours off to rest and do as they please."

Night work was common. Many families worked until 11, 12, and even 1 o'clock. Some firms required that the work be returned daily; others demanded delivery at least three times a week, and with part of the day spent in trips back and forth to the factory late hours were a necessity. One woman said that when she worked in the factory she earned $8 a week and had time for recreation, but doing home work she had to work "all the time" and usually earned less. The previous week she had worked 90 hours and earned $4. Night work was particularly trying to home workers in San Antonio, not only because the work was fine and required painstaking care, but also because few of the houses in the Mexican quarter were equipped with electricity, and the work had to be done by the light of kerosene lamps. Many of the workers, especially the middle-aged women, complained of failing eyesight.

Earnings.

Rates of pay.—Rates of pay varied with the kind and amount of work to be done. One factory had more than 100 home-work patterns with a specific rate for each. The price paid for the home-work operations in the study ranged from 10 cents a dozen for infants' dresses, on which the hem had to be stitched by hand, the buttonholes made, and the N. R. A. label attached, to $9 a dozen for dresses completely hand-made and elaborately embroidered. For a dozen of the latter kind a fast worker required approximately 96 hours.

Hourly earnings.—Practically all the home processes on infants' and children's wear are highly skilled and almost perfect work is expected of the worker, yet the hourly earnings reported did not equal those usually received for unskilled labor. In spite of the fact that under the provisions of the exemption order granted San Antonio firms, home workers were to receive the same rate of pay as factory workers, and in spite of the fact that under the National Recovery Administration some manufacturers had increased their rates in some instances as much as 30 percent, only 2 of the 90 chief home workers giving information as to their hourly earnings made as much as 20 cents, and almost half earned less than 5 cents. Details of the hourly earnings of chief home workers in the infants' and children's wear industry are given in the following list:

Hourly earnings of chief home worker	Number of workers	Percent distribution
Total	138	
Total reported	90	100
Less than 5 cents	42	47
5 cents, less than 10	40	44
10 cents, less than 15	4	4
15 cents, less than 20	2	2
20 cents, less than 25	2	2
Not reported	48	

Weekly earnings.—In 43 percent of the families doing home work on infants' and children's garments there were at least two home workers, and in almost two-thirds of the families the chief home worker, at least, had worked the 40-hour code week or longer. In only 12 families, however, were the combined weekly earnings from home work as much as the $8 individual minimum permitted by the exemption to the code. As the following list shows, in almost half the families weekly earnings ranged from $1 to $3; in less than one-fourth were they as much as $5.

Weekly earnings of family	Number of families	Percent distribution
Total	138	
Total reported	128	100
Less than $1	10	8
$1, less than $2	32	25
$2, less than $3	30	23
$3, less than $4	18	14
$4, less than $5	9	7
$5, less than $7.50	16	13
$7.50, less than $10	6	5
$10 or more	7	5
Not reported	10	

The median weekly earnings for this industry were $2.73, whereas for all industries included in the study they were $3.17. Many extreme cases of long hours and low earnings were reported, of which the following is typical. Three women in one family, all between 25 and 35 years of age, had been doing home work for the past 6 years.

None of them had ever worked in a factory but they said they would have been glad to do so if jobs had been available. The week of the visit they were smocking and embroidering infants' dresses. The two older women "did nothing but sew" 14½ hours a day, 6 days a week. In addition to helping with the home work, the other woman did the housework and made daily trips to the factory to obtain and return work. The combined earnings of the group for the week previous to the visit were $10.70. The two women working the longer hours made together less than half the code wage in twice the code hours.

Factory adjustments to home-work provisions.

Between the date the code for this industry went into effect and the time of the present study the number of both inside and outside workers in San Antonio factories had fallen off sharply. The decrease in the number of factory workers was said to be due to the inability or unwillingness of manufacturers to pay the minimum wage, in spite of the fact that the manufacturers in this locality had been granted an exemption from the Southern differential already provided in the code. The decrease in the number of home workers was the result of curtailed production following the reduction in factory force. Before the code became effective, the number of factory workers employed by individual San Antonio firms ranged from 30 to 400 and the number of home workers from 100 to 820; at the time of the study the number of factory workers reported varied from 5 to 134 and the number of home workers from 50 to 400 per firm.

From reports of home workers generally and from statements made by members of several firms, it would seem that some manufacturers were taking advantage of the home-work system to avoid paying the minimum wage in the factory. A startling number of instances were found in which hand workers who had not been able to make the minimum wage set by the code had been dismissed from the factory with the suggestion that they do the work at home. As no other work was available, many of these workers had agreed. When interviewed they were doing the same work they had done in the factory, but according to their reports they were averaging only $2 and $3 a week instead of $4 and $5 as in the factory, although their hours of work were as long as if not longer than their factory hours. One worker interviewed, 26 years of age, worked in the factory during the day and did home work at night. Being unable to make the minimum wage of $8 per week at the prevailing piece rates, she was allowed to apply the proceeds from her home work to her factory earnings in order to bring her wages up to the required sum. Her aunt, with whom she lived, had rented a machine at a cost of $2 a month and was helping with the work, because even when the girl did night work she was not always able to make the minimum wage. The week previous to the interview, although they had worked 84 man-hours, the combined earnings of the girl and her aunt had amounted to only $8.53.

San Antonio firms had adjusted in different ways to the prohibition of home work on machine operations. Three of the five firms continued to give out the work regardless of code provisions. Twenty families visited in the course of the study were doing machine work. A fourth factory had changed the style of its garments in order to

eliminate some of the seams and had the one remaining seam done by hand. As a result of this change many workers complained that they were being required to do more work at the same rate of pay. The fifth firm, which was connected with a New York establishment, no longer received orders for machine-made dresses; these were being sent to a branch factory in the Philippines where wages were considerably lower than in San Antonio.

ART-NEEDLEWORK INDUSTRY

The art-needlework industry includes manufacturers concerned with the stamping of goods and the importation or original sale of goods used in connection with art needlework, the processing or importing of yarns and threads for this work, and the sale of art-needlework accessories and tapestry needle-point. It was estimated that there were 62 art-needlework firms in this industry and that most of them employed home workers; the majority were located in New York State. One hundred and nine families, employed by seven of these firms, were interviewed in the course of the study. Practically all these families were located in New York City.

Home-work problem in the industry.

Home work in the art-needlework industry consists of various kinds of hand work, such as embroidery, crochet, needle-point. As a rule the work is confined to samples or articles to be displayed in the art-needlework departments of retail stores for the purpose of stimulating the sale of materials, but occasionally home workers are employed on articles for regular retail trade as well. While most concerns employ a few sample workers inside the factory, most of this work is done in the home.

As the home-work processes on art needlework are highly skilled and the materials valuable, practically all the home workers were adults. Only 11 of the 130 reporting their age were under 20 years of age, and none were under 16 years. A surprisingly large number, almost one-fourth, were 50 years of age or older. Many were men, heads of families who had lost their regular jobs in the depression and had turned to industrial home work, hoping to some extent at least to support their families.

Home-work provisions of the code.

Under the provisions of the art-needlework code, approved March 16, 1934, home work was prohibited except on the finishing of samples and display models not intended for resale. This prohibition went into effect April 1, 1934, but individual firms upon which it would work a particular hardship to adjust to the prohibition within such a short period were permitted to obtain stays up to 2 months. As the greater part of the home work in this industry had always been confined to samples and display models, the actual reduction in home work was slight.

Contractors as well as manufacturers were covered by the broad home-work provisions of the code, and both were required to report the names and addresses of all home workers to the code authority. The code contained no provision for regulating the rates of pay to home workers, and the code authority had made no attempt on its own authority to regulate their pay. At the time that the codes

became invalid, however, an amendment to the code had been announced, which provided for the establishment of a committee to prepare a schedule of rates for home workers and to study the "broad problem" of home work in the industry with a view to making recommendations as to the possibility of either eliminating or regulating home work.

Hours of work and earnings.

Hours of work.—The maximum number of hours permitted under the labor provisions of the art-needlework code, which apparently applied to home workers as well as to factory workers, was 40 per week. Yet two-fifths, 40 percent, of the chief home workers reporting their hours of work in this study had been employed more than 40 hours in the week previous to the interview. Almost one-fifth, 17 percent, reported 60 hours or more. One woman reported that she sometimes worked until 2 and 3 o'clock in the morning in order to finish a piece of work that the factory had made her promise to return at a given time. Another woman said that she worked "just as long as she could hold out"; on some days she kept at the work from 8 a. m. to 6.30 p. m. and after an interval for supper worked from 7 to 10 or 11 p. m. On other days 5 or 6 hours were all she could manage. A third woman, who could not work by artificial light, worked regularly 8 hours during the day on home work and did her housework, including the washing and ironing, at night.

Many other workers reported night work and equally long hours, refuting the arguments of certain employers in this industry, as well as in many other home-work industries, that it would be impossible to have this type of work brought into the factory, as workers could not concentrate on it for 7 to 8 hours with only a lunch-hour interruption.

Rates of pay.—Rates of pay to home workers varied with the type of work and the time required to complete it. For such articles as towels with only a small amount of simple embroidery, which could be finished by a rapid worker in a few hours, the rate of pay was as low as 25 cents a towel. Larger articles requiring more time and more careful and skillful work brought higher prices; the rate for hooking rugs, for instance, was $1.12½ a square foot, and for cross-stitched lunch cloths $3.50 apiece and up.

There seemed to be no systematic method by which rates of pay were set in the different firms visited. In some, sample makers in the factory served as rate setters; in others, the methods were more haphazard. One manufacturer interviewed said that he "had an idea" how long it would take to do each article and paid accordingly. Another reported that the price for each piece of work was reached through "haggling." In other words, he paid the lowest rate he could persuade the home worker to take, regardless of the price he was paying other home workers for the same article. Still another manufacturer reported that he fixed his rates according to the time it took a home worker to make each article after she had made several and acquired speed on each pattern.

Several home workers reported that when they were working on new articles, for which the price to the retailer had not been set, they were not informed until after the article had been put on the market how much they would be paid for their work. One woman, working

for a manufacturer who sells his entire factory output to two chain stores, said that she never knew how much she would get for a new article until samples were submitted to these two concerns and the sale price settled by them. Sometimes she waited 3 or 4 weeks for payment.

Hourly earnings.—A considerable number of the home workers, 29 percent, had not done home work before the code was established for the industry; of those who had, however, only one reported any increase in the rate of pay since the code became effective; five reported a decrease, and the remainder had found no change. Nearly two-thirds of the chief home workers in the families visited reported hourly earnings of less than 15 cents, and only one-fifth made as much as 20 cents.

Hourly earnings of chief home worker:	*Number of families*
Total	109
Less than 5 cents	11
5 cents, less than 10	33
10 cents, less than 15	20
15 cents, less than 20	19
20 cents, less than 25	14
25 cents, less than 30	5
30 cents, less than 35	1
Not reported	6

As one woman, engaged in faggoting collars, said, "To make 15 cents an hour you have to be quick." This woman was an expert worker and was often called into the factory to set the rate for new designs. At the factory she was paid 20 cents an hour for her work, but for home work on a piece-work basis she averaged only 15 cents an hour although she worked at the same rate of speed. Another worker visited reported that $1 a day for 12 and sometimes 14 hours of work would be a fair estimate of her home-work earnings during the past 2 years regardless of the kind of work on which she was engaged.

Weekly earnings.—Weekly earnings, which are shown in the following list, fell far short in most instances of the code minimum of $13, the median being $4.04. Only 10 percent of the families interviewed had earned as much as $10, and 34 percent had made less than $3 the previous week. These earnings, although lower than for knitted garments, lace, and gloves, were somewhat higher than for the other industries included in the study and considerably higher than in some—the doll, tag, and infants' knitted-wear industries for example.

Weekly earnings of families:	*Number of families*
Total	109
Less than $1	1
$1, less than $2	16
$2, less than $3	20
$3, less than $4	17
$4, less than $5	13
$5, less than $7.50	22
$7.50, less than $10	9
$10, less than $15	4
$15, less than $20	5
$20 or more	2

For 88 of the 109 families visited in which there was only one home worker it is possible to show the relation between earnings and hours of work. In only 11 instances were individual workers able to earn as much as $5 in less than 40 hours, and only 14 made as much as that by working 40, 50, and even longer hours; in fact, of 36 workers in the group employed 40 hours or more, 22 earned less than $5.

Charges and deductions.

Almost half of the home workers working on art needlework who were interviewed reported that they were required to make deposits varying in amount from $1 to $2.75 to cover the cost of materials that might be spoiled and of such equipment as frames for hooked rugs and waffle work. This deposit was returned when work was discontinued.

Serious complaints were made of the practice of rejecting imperfect work. According to reports, the practice of most firms when work was poorly done was to allow the worker to keep the article in question if she was able to pay for the materials used; otherwise the company took it and the worker received nothing for her labor. As the materials used were expensive a home worker was seldom able to pay the amount demanded for the rejected article. It was reported that these articles were later sold by the firm at a profit, but this was not verified.

Before the time of the National Recovery Administration many firms were in the habit of paying home workers' carfare to and from the factory, but this practice was discontinued when the code went into effect. As many workers made three and four trips a week the added expense affected their earnings appreciably.

FRESH-WATER PEARL BUTTON INDUSTRY

The manufacturers of fresh-water pearl buttons established a code separate from the other branches of the button industry. Although it is the largest single branch of the button industry, controlling more than one-third of the button production in the United States, the fresh-water pearl button industry is comparatively small, having altogether less than 5,000 factory employees.

Fresh-water pearl buttons are made from fresh-water mussel shells found largely in the streams of the Mississippi Valley. Muscatine, Iowa, is the center of the industry but isolated factories are to be found in neighboring States and a few are located in Eastern States. The information for this study was obtained in Muscatine and all the 100 families interviewed were located there.

Home-work problem in the industry.

Button carding has been a home process for more than 40 years; the practice was brought from Germany with the beginning of the industry in this country. Although a large proportion of the button manufacturers sell their entire output in bulk to clothing manufacturers, it is estimated that between 12½ and 15 percent of the buttons that are manufactured are carded. Whenever carding is done it is a home process. Only samples are carded in the factory. The work is highly seasonal and the maximum number of home

workers is two or three times as much as the minimum. In Muscatine there were seven finishing plants, of which six had at least a part of their buttons carded. At the peak season one of these firms employed approximately 600 home workers; the remaining five together employed between 275 and 300. No contractors were employed by the firms visited. One factory made use of district agents who were paid a commission on the amount of work handled, but the home workers' pay roll was made up in the factory and pay envelopes were delivered directly to the worker.

Before the National Industrial Recovery Act was passed much of the carding of buttons was done by children. Of the 158 persons reporting home work in the families included in this study, however, only 9 were under 16 years of age. Although the number of children working was no doubt larger than reported, the efforts to prevent their employment that were made by the one firm employing practically two-thirds of the home workers in the locality undoubtedly had had some effect. This firm required every parent applying for home work to sign a statement that children under 16 years of age would not be permitted to assist with the work. In addition, this firm required all home workers to sign the same pay roll, believing that if they could see the amount of one another's earnings it would act as a deterrent to the employment of children. Nevertheless, several flagrant examples of family labor that included young children were found. For example, in one family the mother, two girls aged 13 and 10, and a boy of 7 were the home workers. The children worked after school and in the evenings, the number of hours they worked depending upon the amount of work on hand. The 10-year-old girl assumed all responsibility for obtaining and returning the work, even signing the pay roll and collecting the pay envelope.

Home-work provisions of the code.

The code for the fresh-water pearl-button industry, which became effective March 12, 1934, neither prohibited nor limited home work. It provided, however, that the code authority should study the home-work problem in the industry and within 5 months suggest appropriate provisions for its regulation. The code also required the code authority, with the approval of the administrator, to set piece rates for the carding of buttons in homes. Accordingly, in the summer of 1934 piece rates for carding were submitted to the National Recovery Administration by the code authority. They were approved and became effective, subject to review after a 2 months' trial period, on October 27, 1934. It was estimated by members of the industry that the new rates represented an increase of 100 percent over those in effect in July 1933 and that they would yield hourly earnings of from 18 to 23 cents.

At the time the N. R. A. codes became invalid, these rates were still in effect, and a new proposed code was under consideration that would have covered all branches of the button industry.

Hours of work.

The hours worked by button carders depended entirely upon the frequency with which orders were received at the factory. Many workers complained of the irregularity of the work and when an assignment was received rushed to complete it as soon as possible so that they might not lose a chance at the next. At the time of the

study most families were receiving only one or two assignments a week.

Because of the workers' desire to obtain as much work as possible, and because most of the plants required that assignments be returned within 1 or at most 2 days, long hours were the rule when work was available. Often the distribution of the buttons was made around 4 p. m., and the work had to be done at night if it was to be returned the next day. Some families made it a practice to rise in time to card 5 or 6 gross of buttons before breakfast. One mother reported that she and her two daughters, 11 and 12 years, had started carding buttons at 6:30 a. m. the morning they were visited and had worked until 8:15 a. m., when the girls had eaten breakfast and left for school. The night before all three had worked from 6 to 9 p. m.

Earnings.

Rates of pay.—Button carders were paid for the number of cards filled, a gross of buttons being the unit. The rate varied with the number of buttons on the card, the smaller number bringing the higher rate because more cards had to be prepared (tinfoil cut and fitted to the card) for the same number of buttons, and this necessarily slowed up production.

Under the schedule of rates set by the National Recovery Administration, which went into effect the week after the study, the button carders had had two increases in piece rates since July 1, 1933. The following list shows the minimum piece-work rates paid home workers for carding fresh-water pearl buttons. A range in rates indicates a difference between factories.

Number of buttons on card	Rate per gross before Mar. 12, 1934 (effective date of code)	Rate per gross from Mar. 12, 1934, to Oct. 27, 1934	Rate per gross after Oct. 27, 1934 (effective date of rates approved by N. R. A.)
	Cents	*Cents*	*Cents*
12	2	2¼–3	4
9	2¾	3¾	5
7	2 –3¼	3 –4¼	5
6	2 –3	2½–3½	5½
4	2¼–3½	3¼–4	6
3	2¼–4	2¾–5	6
2	3 –6	4 –6½	7
1	6 –10	7 –10	8

Hourly earnings.—It was estimated by members of the industry that the piece rates for carding buttons that were in effect at the time of the study were yielding earnings of 15 and 16 cents an hour, and that under the new rates these earnings would be increased to from 18 to 23 cents an hour. None of the chief home workers in the families interviewed, however, reported a rate of production that yielded such earnings. The 12-button card, which was the one most frequently found in the homes, was the one that brought the highest earnings. Few workers were able to card as many as 4 gross of this variety in an hour; the majority averaged 3 gross, and many could do no more than 2 or 2½ gross. At this rate of production the hourly earnings of the majority ranged from 5 to 9 cents under the rates in effect at the time of the study. Under the new rates,

which were to go into effect the week following the study, earnings would have ranged from 8 to 12 cents.

According to the home workers the rates of pay did not increase proportionately with the decrease in the number of buttons on the card, so that earnings from the cards with fewer buttons were relatively lower. For the cards containing fewer than 12 buttons, 3 gross per hour was an exceptional rate of production. The usual rate was 2 or 2½ gross of 6-button and 1 or at most 2 gross of fewer than 6-button. The 1-, 2-, and 5-button cards were not being widely distributed at the time of the study, but for the 6-button the majority of the workers were earning from 5 to 9 cents an hour and for the 3- and 4-button from 3 to 10 cents. Under the new rates these earnings would be increased to from 11 to 14 cents and 6 to 12 cents, respectively.

The following list shows detailed hourly earnings at the time of the study of the chief home workers in the families visited.

Hourly earnings of chief home worker:	*Number of workers*
Total	100
Less than 5 cents	3
5 cents, less than 10	73
10 cents, less than 15	22
Not reported	2

Weekly earnings.—The weekly earnings reported from home work ranged from 31 cents to $11.59 a family. However, as the following list shows, the great majority, 77 percent, of the families earned between $1 and $4. Only 37 families reported earnings of $3 or more, and all but 7 of these had two or more home workers in the household. The median weekly earnings reported were $2.55.

Weekly earnings of family:	*Number of families*
Total	100
Less than $1	5
$1, less than $2	29
$2, less than $3	29
$3, less than $4	19
$4, less than $5	13
$5, less than $7.50	2
$7.50, less than $10	2
$10, less than $15	1

Records of earnings kept over a period of several months by a number of the button carders who were interviewed showed that while individual earnings varied to some extent from week to week in this industry, they were exceedingly low at all times.

DOLL AND DOLL-ACCESSORY INDUSTRY

The doll and doll-accessory industry includes a comparatively small number of firms, the majority of which are located in New York City. At the time of this study the New York law prohibited work on dolls' clothes as well as on children's garments in tenements but not in one- and two-family houses in places of less than 200,000 population. For this reason, home workers employed by New York City firms were located, for the most part, across the State line in various New Jersey cities. As a matter of fact some home workers in New Jersey were found in tenements (i. e., buildings in which three or more families

live), contrary to the law of that State, but New York manufacturers cannot be prosecuted under the New Jersey law nor can they be held responsible under the New York law for work sent outside the State. The 86 families included in the study were all residents of Newark, N. J.

Home-work problem in the industry.

Home work in the doll and doll-accessory industry consists of making dolls' clothes and occasionally of seaming cloth dolls and animals preparatory to stuffing; both are machine operations. For many firms the making of dolls' clothes is almost exclusively a home process; for others special orders and sometimes even a part of the regular stock are made in the factory.

Before the code for this industry went into effect the nine doll manufacturers visited in the course of the study had employed approximately 600 home workers and 13 contractors. Five hundred of the home workers were employed by one firm alone. The other eight firms distributed largely through contractors.

As a rule contractors in this industry are home workers as well as distributors. Some of them even maintain small shops where part of their work is done. One such contractor interviewed had 10 and another had 18 machines, although not all of them were in operation at the time of the visit. Like the home workers, most of the contractors were located in New Jersey.

Making doll dresses is usually a family activity. It is simple, unskilled work, easily learned. Children too young to operate a machine cut threads and turn the dresses. Sixty-nine percent of the families visited included two or more home workers. In one-third of the families there were at least three workers and in 14 percent four or more. Several of the families kept two or three sewing machines in almost constant operation, and where there was only one machine various members of the family often took turns operating it. A larger number of children were found doing this work than any other work in the study. Of the 86 families visited, 39 reported the assistance of children under 16, and of the total number of home workers reporting their ages in these 86 families, 189 workers or one-third were under 16 and almost one-fifth were under 14 years. In one family five children, 8, 9, 11, 13, and 14 years of age, respectively, were found helping with the work.

Home-work provisions of the code.

According to the classification of the National Recovery Administration the doll and doll-accessory industry was a part of the toy and plaything industry. Under the code for that industry, which was approved November 4, 1933, home work was prohibited on January 1, 1934. In interpreting the terms of the code, however, some manufacturers in the doll and doll-accessory industry took the stand that, because of the failure of the code to cover contractors specifically, contractors in the industry were not subject to the home-work provisions, and although these manufacturers discontinued giving work directly to home workers they were still distributing it through contractors. At the time of the study, at least, manufacturers giving out home work made no apparent discrimination between contractors who merely acted as distributors and those who had a part of the work done in the shop and were thus subject to the code provisions the same as any other manufacturer.

Hours of work and earnings.

Hours of work.—Specific information as to hours of work is difficult to obtain where home work is a family activity and different members of the household take their turn at the machine as in the doll industry. Reasonably accurate data were obtained from the chief home workers in only 31 of the 86 families interviewed. Of these over one-third (11) had worked 40 hours or more the previous week, and 7 had worked 60 hours or more.

Earnings.—Piece rates were extremely low in this industry. Small-size dresses, which for some workers at least were more difficult to handle than the larger sizes, carried a rate as low as 4 cents, 3 cents, 2 cents, and even 1 cent a dozen; for the larger sizes rates varied from 5 cents to as high as 33⅓ cents a dozen.

Hourly earnings.—The code for this industry set a minimum hourly rate of 30 cents. Information on hourly earnings could be obtained for only 16 of the 86 chief home workers included in the study, but of these none reported earnings of more than 12 cents an hour and 9 earned less than 5 cents an hour.

Weekly earnings.—Weekly earnings reported by 78 of the 86 families ranged from 25 cents to $17.48. However, more than three-fourths of the families earned less than $5 and almost half earned less than $2. All earnings of $5 or more and in most instances those in excess of $2 represented the work of two or more home workers. In one family visited two girls aged 15 and 12 were the home workers. Each had her own sewing machine. The week previous to the visit their joint earnings were $1.25. In another family the mother and father worked regularly during the day, both operating machines. At 3:30 p. m. a 16-year-old daughter relieved either father or mother and work was continued until 9 p. m., with only an interval for supper. On Saturday the girl worked all day with one or the other of her parents. A 15-year-old sister turned and trimmed the dresses on Saturdays and after school on week days. The earnings of the four had amounted to $10 the previous week. In still another family a 16-year-old girl was the chief home worker. A 14-year-old sister helped, sometimes with the stitching but more often with the turning and trimming. The older girl averaged 60 hours of work a week; the younger worked irregularly. The week for which they reported their earnings the two girls had made $4.

Making doll dresses is tedious, irritating work, especially when the garments are small, and most of the families seemed to agree with the woman who said: "It's better to work in a shop if you can. You have to sweat to make $2 at home."

Operating costs carried by home workers.

Home workers who make doll dresses are subject to considerable expense in connection with their work. Several of the families visited had invested in two or three sewing machines in order to increase their output, and the monthly installment payments and cost of power, oil, needles, and repairs were often out of all proportion to their meager earnings. Furthermore, home workers in this industry were obliged to furnish their own thread for sewing. It was reported that the cost of this item usually amounted to 65 cents or 75 cents for every $8 or $10 earned. One worker, however, reported that the contractor furnished her with thread regularly and deducted 25

cents from her earnings each pay day (semimonthly). This home worker's earnings had amounted to 46 cents the week previous to the interview.

TAG INDUSTRY

The tag industry as defined by the code includes the manufacture of shipping and system tags, merchandise and marking tags, and pin tickets. The industry is not confined to any particular locality, and its home workers are located both in large cities and small towns. Those included in the study were residents principally of Philadelphia; a few, however, were in New York City and Newark, N. J. Seventy-six families representative of this industry were interviewed. These included 156 home workers.

Home-work problem in the industry.

Although employing only between 2,000 and 2,500 factory workers before the establishment of the National Recovery Administration, the tag industry had been an important home-work industry for many years. In almost every establishment a large proportion if not all of the tags manufactured are strung in the home. This is easy work that even very young children can do. One manufacturer stated frankly that he made use of the home-work system for the very reason that "whole families, even tiny tots, turn in and do the work, mostly after supper, and orders can be filled quickly."

Seven percent of the tag workers included in the study were children under 16 years of age. This is probably an understatement of the facts, however, as the majority of the home workers in this industry were located in Pennsylvania where home work on the part of children under 16 is a violation of the child-labor law. According to reports of the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry illegal employment of children on home work is more common in the tag industry than in practically any other home-work industry in the State.

Home-work provisions of the code.

The tag-industry code as approved February 1, 1934, prohibited home work after May 1 of that year. On April 27, however, a stay of the home-work prohibition to June 1 was obtained by the code authority on the ground that sufficient time had not been allowed for the elimination of a practice so long established, and during the period of this stay home work was distributed without restriction or regulation. A further extension of the stay was obtained on June 20. Later, October 25, 1934, an amendment to the code was approved, which set January 1, 1935, as the date on which home work should be discontinued, the industry by this time having been given practically a year in which to adjust. For the period between the approval of the amendment and its effective date the code authority prepared a schedule of rates for home-work operations that would assure earnings equal to at least the minimum wage of the code, to be put into effect November 1. Until that date home workers were to receive rates that would yield at least 80 percent of the code minimum wage.

Hours of work.

The weekly hours reported by the chief home workers engaged in stringing tags were not excessive. Because of the irregularity of the work and the fact that tag stringing, like many other types of home

work, is a family activity, it was difficult to obtain information regarding hours of work, but of the 45 chief home workers who were able to give this information, 25 had worked less than 20 hours, and only 6 had worked as many as 30 hours the week previous to the visit. Like most firms in this industry, those giving out work to the families included in the study manufactured on order, and to insure filling rush orders promptly, they were in the habit of employing large numbers of home workers, giving only a limited amount of work to each family. At the time of the study the "spread the work" program in effect during the depression had greatly encouraged this practice. Many complaints were heard as to the small amount of work available and a number of women told of standing in line 2 or 3 hours at a time only to find the supply of tags exhausted by the time their turn came.

Although the practice of giving out work late one day and requiring it to be returned early the next was not so common at the time of the study as it had been in the past, nevertheless many of the home workers interviewed reported that considerable night work was necessary in order to complete the work in time for the morning collection. The usual daily assignment of work varied from 1,000 to 5,000 tags; occasionally an especially favored family received more. The time necessary to complete the assignment depended, of course, upon the number and speed of the workers. One family, which had had 10 years' experience in stringing tags and which was able to obtain exceptionally large assignments, gave the following report of their work. At 11:30 a. m. the day of the visit, the family had received 10,000 tags which were to be called for early the next morning. At 4:30 p. m., when the representative of the United States Department of Labor arrived at the home, the mother and three children, aged 18, 13, and 8 years, had been working steadily since the arrival of the work and were on their "fifth thousand." The mother said that as soon as the 16-year-old girl came in from school she would help and that an older daughter and the father would join the group after supper and work until the consignment was finished.

If delivered late in the afternoon, even small assignments meant night work. One family, which had strung 20,000 tags the week previous to the visit, reported that if the tags arrived around 1 o'clock in the afternoon by working steadily they could finish with only an hour or two of work after supper; but if delivery was not made until late in the afternoon they had to work until 11 or 12 p. m.

Earnings.

Although three of the five firms distributing tags to the workers included in the study reported increases in rates under the National Recovery Administration varying from 10 to 50 percent, in the fall of 1934 earnings were still too low even to approximate a living wage.

Piece rates varied considerably with the different lines of production and with the size and quality of the tag. During the short period just preceding the prohibition of home work, when minimum piece rates were set by the code authority, about 150 or more rates were in effect. At the time of the study most of the family were working on "end knots",[28] for which the rate varied from 5 to 22 cents a thousand, and "plain loops",[29] which brought from 9 to 20 cents a thousand.

[28] On "end knots" the string is slipped through the tag and knotted at the end.
[29] On "plain loops" the string is slipped through the tag and looped but not knotted.

Hourly earnings could be ascertained for only 42 of the 76 chief home workers stringing tags. Of these 36 earned less than 10 cents an hour and none made as much as 15 cents. Weekly earnings as reported by 73 families ranged from less than $1 to $12.50 but in only 4 families were they as much as $4, and in almost two-thirds they were less than $2. The median weekly earnings were $1.59. These reports of low earnings given by the home workers were substantiated by the following pay-roll figures obtained from one firm that regularly employed about 200 home workers. These figures represent earnings for the week ending September 26, 1934:

Weekly earnings of families	Number of home workers	Percent distribution
Total	118	100
Less than $1	17	14
$1, less than $2	64	54
$2, less than $3	34	29
$3, less than $4	3	3

Charges and deductions.

There were no charges for materials in connection with home work in the tag industry; all materials were furnished and some waste was expected and allowed for. Tags were given out in special boxes, however, and home workers reported that if these boxes were damaged the workers were charged for spoilage; also that when tags were delivered fresh from the press, as sometimes happened, if they were blurred in the stringing the worker was fined 25 cents for each 1,000 tags. Notices warning the worker of the condition of the tags were enclosed in each box.

LEATHER-GLOVE INDUSTRY

The leather-glove industry was covered by the code for leather and woolen-knit gloves. This industry is highly localized. According to the 1931 Census of Manufactures, 69 percent of the wage earners in the industry were concentrated in New York State, Fulton County alone having 63 percent of the workers. The remainder were located, for the most part, in Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, and California.[30] The 68 home workers included in this study were located in New York City.

Home-work problem in the industry.

Home work has always played an important part in the manufacture of leather gloves. The practice is not extensive in the Western States but in New York State, where the industry is centered, it is estimated that almost 40 percent of the total number of employees in the industry are home workers.[31] This industry is well organized, and wage negotiations, which are carried on yearly, cover both factory workers and home workers. Although the rates paid home workers have always been lower by agreement than those paid factory workers,

[30] Biennial Census of Manufactures, 1931, p. 712-715. U. S. Bureau of the Census. Washington, 1935.
[31] Code of Fair Competition for the Leather- and Woolen-Knit Glove Industry, p. 370. National Recovery Administration. Washington, 1934.

nevertheless they are well above the wage level of most home-work industries.

Practically all operations connected with the manufacture of gloves were being performed in the home to some extent, but the chief home-work processes were the making, or seaming of the glove, and "silking." The latter was the term applied to stitching the design on the back of the glove. This was a machine operation, although it was sometimes combined with hand work. Gloves were made, or seamed, in a variety of ways. The operations performed were similar in each case, the stitch depending upon the type of machine attachment used. Making the glove consisted of inserting the thumb piece; fitting in the side finger pieces (forchettes) and, on some styles of gloves, the small triangular piece at the base of the finger (quirks); closing the fingers; hemming or binding the bottom; and on button gloves hemming or binding the opening. As a rule the home worker made the complete glove. This work is highly skilled and a considerable period is required for learning.

Some of the workers interviewed reported that they had been making gloves for 30 years or more; many had learned the trade in France or Italy. Because of the skill and training required, the workers were all older girls and women. Of the 68 glove workers included in the study none was under 16 years of age and only 7 were under 20 years of age.

Home-work provisions of the code.

Under the provisions of the code, which became effective November 13, 1933, the leather-glove industry attempted to eliminate home work by a gradual reduction in the number of workers. Within 6 months after the code went into effect (by May 1934), employers were required to reduce their outside sewing-machine operators by at least 25 percent; and within 1 year they were to have made a further 25-percent reduction. Names of all outside workers were to be registered with the code authority, and from the date the code became effective no new home workers were to be employed. At the end of 1 year the code authority was to submit recommendations as to the method by which complete elimination could be effected. In lieu of setting minimum wages for the skilled occupations in the industry, the code provided that minimum scales for piece-work operations should be established for the entire industry, such rates to be determined by the code authority, with the approval of the National Recovery Administrator. In establishing these rates the code authority followed the Fulton County, N. Y., wage agreement between manufacturers and the union, which provides for a wage scale for home workers 10 percent below that for factory workers.

Hours of work and earnings.

Hours of work.—Only 5 of the 48 chief home workers giving information as to their hours of work had exceeded the 40-hour limit set by the codes; in fact only 12 reached this maximum, while over half worked less than 30 hours.

Rates of pay.—Only two kinds of gloves were being made by the home workers visited at the time of this study—overseam and piqué. Of the two varieties piqué demands the greater skill and brings a higher rate of pay. Piece rates for overseaming as reported by the home workers ranged from $1.35 to $1.60 a dozen pairs, the

most usual price being $1.35 a dozen. Those for piqué seaming varied from $1.60 to $1.77 a dozen pairs, the most usual being $1.60. Hemming the bottom of the glove or attaching the cuff brought an additional compensation of from 15 to 25 cents a dozen. The rate for silking, the only other kind of home work observed on gloves, as reported by three workers was 30 cents, 45 cents, and $1 a dozen pairs.

Hourly earnings.—Although not commensurate with earnings of factory workers engaged in the same kind of work, the earnings of the home workers in the glove industry were relatively high. Even in the lace industry, in which earnings were above those in most home-work industries, no large proportion of the home workers made as much as the majority of the glove workers made. Of the 49 chief home workers reporting their earnings from work on gloves, 21 had earned at least 40 cents an hour and only 6 earned less than 25 cents an hour.

Weekly earnings.—Weekly earnings were likewise relatively high. Of the 50 families interviewed almost half had earned at least $10 the week previous to the visit, and approximately one-fourth had earned $15 or more. In most of these families there was only one home worker but in 14 the weekly earnings reported represented the work of at least two people. Earnings of $15 or more were usually the proceeds from more than one person's work, but three individual workers reported earnings of at least as much as that for a working week of 24 hours in one instance and of 40 hours in the other instances.

Charges and deductions.

Home workers in the leather-glove industry were under considerable expense for equipment and electric power. Half the families visited had invested in power machines at a cost varying from $30 to $200, depending upon whether the machines were second-hand or new; the remainder were using foot machines for which they had paid from $30 to $125. Costs for small equipment, such as scissors, tweezers, and stretchers, averaged in the neighborhood of $1.50 to $2, and monthly operating costs, that is for needles, power, and oil, were around $1.40. The most significant item, however, after machines are once paid for, is the cost of upkeep. One home worker estimated that this averaged $6 or $7 a year. Another reported that during the 5 years she had owned her power machine she had had to change the motor three times at a cost of $16.50 each time.

Reduction in number of home workers.

Although at the time of the study manufacturers in the leather-glove industry had had almost 1 year in which to comply with the provisions of the code, there was little evidence to show that the New York City firms at least had made any effort to reduce the number of home workers employed. According to the provisions of the code the number should have been reduced at least 25 percent by May 1934 and 50 percent by November 1934. Yet in September 1934 only 4 of the 12 glove manufacturers visited had made any permanent adjustment. Two firms that had never employed more than a half dozen home workers had practically discontinued home work and one other, while still employing some home workers, had made an honest effort to reduce the number and to replace those dismissed with factory workers. Of the remaining firms several had made no effort whatsoever to reduce their home-work force and several others apparently

felt no responsibility in the matter, as they distributed their work through contractors. No evidence could be found that they were curtailing the amount of work given the contractors. A few firms that were operating with a reduced force of home workers reported that they were doing so only because work was slack; and intimated that as soon as production increased the usual number would be employed. One manufacturer who had started his business in February 1934, more than 6 months after the code became effective, was employing 100 home workers when he was visited in September 1934.

The evidence obtained in the course of the study—that the provision of the code dealing with the elimination of home workers was not being observed by manufacturers—was substantiated by information submitted to the National Recovery Administration at a public hearing of the industry held March 12, 1935. This information was based upon a statistical report made public by the code authority, which covered 346 manufacturers in the industry. Of these approximately 34 percent failed to report as to the status of their home workers. Of the 229 reporting, 13 percent stated they were employing no home workers; 58 percent failed to show any reduction in the number of home workers employed; and 6 percent filed notice of reductions amounting to less than 25 percent. The remainder showed reductions equal to or in excess of 25 percent, but none showed a reduction amounting to 50 percent as required by code agreement.

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