

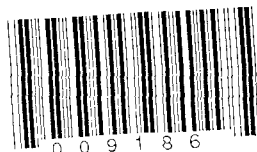
**INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE**

# **THE WAR AND WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT**

**THE EXPERIENCE OF THE UNITED KINGDOM  
AND THE UNITED STATES**



**MONTREAL  
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## PREFACE

This study is presented as an addition to the series of reports on the economic status of women which was begun by the International Labour Office before the recent war in accordance with a decision taken by the Governing Body at its 74th Session in February 1936. The first of these studies, as planned, was published in 1939 and entitled *The Law and Women's Work*. It was a review of the problems of working women and a compilation and analysis of international standards and legislation concerning them.<sup>1</sup>

It was expected at that time that an analysis of practice under the law would follow immediately in a series of publications. In the Introduction to the first study it was stated:

The present study on *The Law and Women's Work* carries out the initial decision taken by the Governing Body . . . But in accordance with the decision taken at the same session regarding the proposal made by the Director of the Office, this volume is to be only the introduction to a series of studies which, after treating of legislation, will proceed to examine the practical problems and the economic situation of working women.<sup>2</sup>

War interrupted the further publication of comprehensive studies. However, the Office continued to study the development of women's employment particularly in belligerent countries. During the years of war, frequent articles on the subject were published in the *International Labour Review* and in *Industrial and Labour Information*, which is now incorporated in the *Review*. These articles described the experience of many belligerent and of some neutral countries; they reported changes in legislation or administrative policies touching recruitment, placement in war industry and the war services, wages and the welfare services which were calculated to aid women's adjustment to wartime requirements for their skill and labour.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *The Law and Women's Work*, Studies and Reports, Series I (Employment of Women and Children), No. 4, International Labour Office, Geneva, 1939.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. vii and viii.

<sup>3</sup> Articles and notes were published between 1939 and 1945 dealing with problems and policies in Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, Great Britain, British Dependent Territories, India, Mexico, New Zealand, Rumania, Sweden, Switzerland, the United States and the U.S.S.R.

The present study has been planned as a continuation of the series undertaken by the Office in pre-war years. It will be followed by others, as data become available, concerning the war and post-war economic conditions and problems of women in various countries.

The subject matter and organisation of the study require some explanation. War has affected the nations of the world very differently. While it has had relatively little influence upon the economy of a few countries, for most of them, because of its extent and its cataclysmic character, it has brought profound changes in economic conditions. In some countries, especially those occupied by the enemy, it has not only interfered with all customary governmental functions, including the gathering of statistics, but it has disrupted the entire productive system. In certain belligerent countries, however, which were required to direct their total national effort to war production and were able to do so without suffering the interruption and deprivations of invasion and occupation, the impact of an artificially expanded economy has had great influence upon the use of women's productive capacities.

Two of the last-named group and, at the same time, two of the economically most important countries are the United Kingdom and the United States. For these two countries, also, a considerable body of data was immediately available. An analysis of those data is presented, therefore, because of the very considerable interest attached to them as illustrating the development of women's employment under the stress of war needs.

Statistics were lacking or scanty on certain aspects of the subject, such as the numbers of women employed on specific types of work not previously performed by women, and the development of the social services. Examples, rather than statistical data, have therefore been used at certain points. In view of the pressure of war upon both countries, however, the record that their statistical agencies compiled is remarkably complete.

The data from the two countries have been presented in comparable form wherever the material has lent itself to such treatment. Because of different situations in the two countries and different emphasis in the information gathered, exact similarity in mode and order of presentation was not feasible. In general, however, the data are organised in similar fashion.

It is hoped that the experience of certain other countries as regards the employment of women in war and post-war years may be found capable of analysis in the months and years immediately ahead. As data become available, both concerning the

utilisation of women's labour and concerning changes in women's economic status, if such changes occur, it is hoped that the Office will be able to prepare reports to continue the series and to expand knowledge and understanding of the subject accordingly.

Plainly, changes are taking place in many countries which may profoundly alter the social and economic situation of women. In general, women's status varies directly with the industrial development and technical progress of the economy which predominates among any people. Social customs play an important role, however, in determining the nature and rate of change which follows industrialisation. Moreover, governmental policy in any nation must be built upon a realistic understanding both of the economy and of the social customs of the people. Since the policies of modern Governments, on the other hand, tend to influence the development of the economy directly, and since it is apparent that changes in the economy of the nation alter social needs and consequently, in time, alter social customs, both policy and practice will be presented in these studies.

In conclusion, the International Labour Office wishes to express appreciation for assistance in materials given by the Ministry of Labour and National Service of the United Kingdom and for the advice of the Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor of the United States. Responsibility for interpretation of the data, except as directly quoted, must be borne by the International Labour Office.

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# **PART I**

**United Kingdom**



## INTRODUCTION

### WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT FROM 1914 TO 1939

Before an account is given of the main developments which took place during the 1939-1945 War regarding women's employment in the United Kingdom, it may be interesting to recall the facts which characterised the employment of women during the First World War and the inter-war period.

#### INCREASED EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN

Women's employment increased in the First World War on account of factors largely comparable to those which determined—though on a larger scale—the increase in women's employment during the recent war. War conditions affected mostly women working in factories, especially in war industries. Statistical data indicate the extent to which the female labour force was affected by war production demands and by the mobilisation of men in the armed forces, from July 1914 to July 1918.

During this period, the total number of occupied women increased by  $22\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., or from just under 6 million to nearly  $7\frac{1}{3}$  million, according to the table overleaf issued in 1918 by the Board of Trade.

The greatest increases occurred in this order: in industry; in commerce (mostly clerks and shop assistants); in the national and local Government (mainly in the Civil Service, which took on some 163,000 women clerks, etc.) and in transport.<sup>1</sup>

#### EMPLOYMENT AND CONDITIONS OF WORK OF WOMEN IN INDUSTRY

After a period of unemployment due to "the partial cessation of foreign orders and by a reduction of avoidable expenditure at home", which lasted until mid-1915, unemployed women were rapidly absorbed in munitions factories, particularly metal and chemical trades.

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<sup>1</sup> *Report of the War Cabinet Committee on Women in Industry* (H.M. Stationery Office, Cmd. 135, 1919), p. 80.

TABLE I. NUMBERS OF WOMEN EMPLOYED, JULY 1914-JULY 1918

Occupations	In July 1914	In July 1918	In July 1918, over (+) or under (—) numbers in July 1914
On their own account or as employers.....	430,000	470,000	+ 40,000
In industry.....	2,178,600	2,970,600	+ 792,000
In domestic service.....	1,658,000	1,258,000	— 400,000
In commerce, etc.....	505,500	934,500	+ 429,000
In national and local Govern- ment including education....	262,200	460,200	+ 198,000
In agriculture.....	190,000	228,000	+ 38,000
In employment in hotels, public houses, theatres, etc.....	181,000	220,000	+ 39,000
In transport.....	18,200	117,200	+ 99,000
In other, including professional employment, and as home workers <sup>1</sup> .....	542,500	652,500	+ 110,000
Altogether in occupations.....	5,966,000	7,311,000	+1,345,000
Not in occupations but over 10 years of age <sup>2</sup> .....	12,946,000	12,496,000	— 450,000
Under 10 years of age.....	4,809,000	4,731,000	— 78,000
Total females.....	23,721,000	24,538,000	+ 817,000

<sup>1</sup> Includes the Voluntary Air Detachment nurses and the various naval, military and air organised corps of women (numbering 61,000 in September 1918).

<sup>2</sup> Includes women engaged in domestic work at home and other unpaid work.

Comprehensive official figures<sup>1</sup> give the additions of female workers in the different branches of industry, their effects in altering the proportion of women to men in those branches, and the extent to which females directly replaced males (see table II).

The most urgent demand for labour supply was felt in the Metal Trades. Women workers were recruited intensively from the second half of 1915, and "dilution became, as it continued up to the end of the war, a leading method of increasing the munitions labour supply".<sup>2</sup> But, although "the effect of the war was, in fact, to hasten greatly the previous movement of the trade towards 'specialisation' and subdivision of process"<sup>3</sup>, as the War Cabinet Report pointed out, this fact had an important bearing on women's status in industry. Women replaced men workers to a remarkable extent; it is estimated that, of the 424,000 women who entered the metal trades between July 1914 and July 1918, about 90 per cent. were employed on work customarily done by men. The most

<sup>1</sup> *Report of the War Cabinet Committee on Women in Industry* (H. M. Stationery Office, Cmd. 135, 1919), pp. 80-81.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 81.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 82.

TABLE II. WOMEN EMPLOYED IN INDUSTRY, JULY 1914-JULY 1918

Trades	Estimated number of females employed		Difference between numbers of females employed in July 1914 and July 1918	Percentage to total number of workpeople employed		Estimated number of females directly replacing males in Jan. 1918
	In July 1914	In July 1918		In July 1914	In July 1918	
Metal . . . . .	170,000	594,000	+424,000	9	25	195,000
Chemical . . . . .	40,000	104,000	+ 64,000	20	39	35,000
Textile . . . . .	863,000	827,000	- 36,000	58	67	64,000
Clothing . . . . .	612,000	568,000	- 44,000	68	76	43,000
Food, drink and tobacco . . . . .	196,000	235,000	+ 39,000	35	49	60,000
Paper and printing . . . . .	147,500	141,500	- 6,000	36	48	21,000
Wood . . . . .	44,000	79,000	+ 35,000	15	32	23,000
China and earthenware . . . . .	32,000	197,100	+ 93,000	4	10	62,000
Leather . . . . .	23,100					
Other . . . . .	49,000					
Government establishments . . . . .	2,000	225,000	+223,000	3	47	197,000
Total . . . . .	2,178,600	2,970,600	+792,000	26	37	704,000*

\* *Sic.*

important single trade was shell-making, in which women were employed on all operations, and made up 60 per cent. of the workers.

The large-scale utilisation of women workers on operations usually performed by men and the increased introduction of dilution processes created considerable difficulties regarding the admission of female substitutes for men in skilled operations—that is, the extension of the process of dilution—and the remuneration of these new workers. These problems were of course particularly acute in the munitions trades, and developments which occurred in these fields of employment influenced greatly women's conditions of work, generally.

Owing to the pressure of war demands for munitions, the first question was settled without considerable difficulties. The Shells and Fuzes Agreement, followed by the Treasury Agreement, specifically provided, under certain safeguards to the men's rates, for the admission of female labour; the Munitions of War Act, 1915, applied this agreement to establishments controlled by the Ministry of Munitions.<sup>1</sup>

As regards the remuneration of the new female workers, the situation is much more confused. The above-mentioned documents

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 110.

contained references to wages, but were subject to considerable controversy. After much negotiation a legal minimum wage for women, as well as for male "dilutees", was finally secured through the Munitions of War (Amendment) Act, 1916.<sup>1</sup>

This Act also gave the Ministry of Munitions power to give direction as to the rate of wages, hours of labour, and other conditions of work of female workers employed in establishments covered by the Act. Under this provision, a number of Statutory Orders were issued during 1916 and 1917, and were subsequently consolidated (with amendments) in Order No. 546 of 1918.<sup>2</sup>

Gradually some principles regarding the conditions of work of women in the munitions industry were evolved throughout the war and finally embodied in Order No. 546. What are these principles and what are the net results of the sometimes difficult negotiations, and of trade union pressure? The following quotation from the Report by the War Cabinet Committee gives a general estimate of the new developments:

The enactments of the Statutory Orders as consolidated in Order No. 546 constitute a very important charter for women in industry, and represent a notable achievement of the Ministry of Munitions and their trade union advisers. Many provisions of the Orders which may appear to be of secondary importance were in reality reforms of considerable value to women. Equal payment on systems of payment by results was by no means universally recognised as a principle before the war. The guarantee of their time rates to piece workers . . . [was] an important innovation. It had not even been conceded to male workers in Woolwich Arsenal in pre-war days. The enactment that debit balances should not be carried forward from one week to another, and that all wages and balances should be paid through the office, struck at two unsatisfactory features of the subcontracting system. The definition of a "woman" as a person of 18 was new and of great moment in view of the fact that girls and boys had not previously attained full rates until 21 or later, and that a large proportion of female workers were persons of 18 to 21.<sup>3</sup>

The Statutory Orders covered the greater part of the metal trades and of the chemical trades and the standards of wages of women who were not covered by these Orders were "strongly influenced" by their provisions, especially in the great centres of the munitions industry. Therefore women's conditions of work were affected by the Orders, directly or not, in most industrial fields.

<sup>1</sup> G. D. H. COLE: "Trade Unionism and Munitions", in *Economic and Social History of the World War*, British Series (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Oxford, 1943), pp. 83-87.

<sup>2</sup> *Report of the War Cabinet on Women in Industry*, op. cit., p. 109.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 123-124.



## TRENDS IN WOMEN'S WAGES AND EARNINGS

The general level of women's wages rose considerably during the war. Of course it is necessary to take into account that the cost of living increased twofold and that various methods of wage readjustment were used in order to meet the situation, which led inevitably to an increase in wages.

The pre-war average of women's wages was estimated, "on a liberal basis", at 13s. 6d. a week. On the other hand, it is probable that the average of women's earnings over the whole field of industry proper was towards the end of the war nearer 35s. than 30s. weekly.<sup>1</sup>

In the metal and munitions trades, the actual average of women's wages increased rather more than threefold.<sup>2</sup> In the metal trades, the weekly rate was approximately doubled and the average earnings, including war wages, practically tripled. In munitions trades, the minimum rate, exclusive of all overtime, night work, and excluding balances made on piece, premium bonus or bonus on output, was 33s. a week towards the end of 1918.<sup>3</sup>

In what might be considered mainly as feminine occupations, such as dressmaking, millinery, laundry work, etc., war conditions had comparatively little influence as regards wages.<sup>4</sup>

The relation between men's and women's wages changed considerably during the war. The War Cabinet Committee estimated that, whereas the proportion of the average wages of women to men's was somewhat less than one half in 1914, it had risen to rather more than two thirds at the end of the war.<sup>5</sup>

## WOMEN IN TRADE UNIONS

With the entry of women as substitutes for men in strongly organised industries, female membership in the trade unions increased to a greater pace than would have been expected in normal times. While there were approximately 350,000 female members of trade unions in the United Kingdom before the war, female membership rose to nearly 660,000 at the end of 1917.<sup>6</sup>

Characteristic of this period was the competition within the trade union movement between the skilled workers and the increasingly important group of unskilled or semi-skilled workers, including women.

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 150.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 124.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 150-151.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 151.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 152.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 158.

After agreements had been reached regarding the admission of women in substitution for men workers, campaigns were launched, on the one hand by the Women's Trade Union League and the National Federation of Women Workers in order to organise women employed on munitions work, and on the other hand, by the general labour unions enrolling both men and women. The female membership was thus divided between these two categories of labour organisations.

In the engineering industry, the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, after rejecting the proposal that it should itself admit women into its ranks, preferred an alliance with the National Federation of Women Workers to an alliance with the mixed general labour unions, largely on the grounds that the N.F.W.W. was prepared to give better guarantees as to the restoration of pre-war conditions, and that, organised apart from the less skilled men, the women were likely to prove less dangerous competitors after the war.<sup>1</sup> On 19 June 1915 the A.S.E. sent a circular to all its districts urging them to assist in every possible way the National Federation of Women Workers. In some areas, this alliance worked well; in others hardly at all. In nearly all cases, the majority of the women remained unorganised; and of those who were organised, a rather larger number over the whole country joined the mixed general labour unions than became members of the N.F.W.W. Although the N.F.W.W. rose to a membership of 50,000, mostly in munitions trades, by December 1918 the National Union of General Workers had about 60,000 women workers, and the Workers' Union nearly as many more.<sup>2</sup>

While the A.S.E. kept its doors closed to women, there was a tendency towards the elimination of sex demarcation, which made the work of the separate women's unions appear as redundant. By 1921, the National Federation of Women Workers had become a "district" of the General and Municipal Workers' Union. The Trades Union Congress reserved two places for women on its General Council.<sup>3</sup>

#### INTER-WAR DEVELOPMENTS

As has been seen, war conditions brought about substantial changes in the distribution as well as in the volume of the female

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<sup>1</sup> G. D. H. COLE, *loc. cit.*, pp. 203-204.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 83 and 204.

<sup>3</sup> Mary Agnes HAMILTON: *Women at Work* (George Routledge and Sons Ltd., London, 1941), pp. 97 *et seq.*

labour force, particularly in industry. But wartime developments seem to have had little bearing on the long-range trends of women's employment.

The proportion of women working in factories reverted soon after the war to the pre-war level and remained, as a whole, remarkably stable until 1938. While women made up 32.3 per cent. of the total number employed in factories in 1913, their proportion was already back to 35.2 in 1919 and decreased to 32.8 per cent. in 1938; there was a slight increase of percentage in 1933 (35.9).

Although there was very little variation in the general proportion of the female labour force in the total labour force, the distribution of women workers changed in some industries. The proportion of women factory workers increased considerably in a few industries, notably in the metal-work factories (excluding metal extraction and engine and shipbuilding), where the proportion of women steadily increased from 8.8 per cent. in 1913 to 16.4 per cent. in 1938, reaching 18.2 per cent. in 1933. In engine and shipbuilding, the percentage rose also from 0.9 in 1913 to 4.3 in 1938, with a sudden rise to 6.7 per cent. in 1919. In the other factories, the fluctuations in the proportion of women workers to the total factory labour force were comparatively small and, after an often considerable increase in 1919, receded promptly; in no one industry did the gains made during the war remain. The following table<sup>1</sup> gives details about the proportion of women employed in factories from 1913 to 1938:

TABLE III. CHANGES IN THE PROPORTION OF WOMEN EMPLOYED IN FACTORY INDUSTRIES, 1913-1938

Factories	Percentage of females of total number of persons employed					
	1913	1919	1924	1929	1933	1938
Cotton.....	60.7	65.3	63.8	63.3	63.0	63.2
Wool and worsted.....	57.2	59.9	56.4	59.3	58.7	58.0
Other textiles.....	66.0	70.7	70.0	69.9	68.4	66.0
Metals (extraction, etc.).....	8.1	7.1	6.2	6.9	7.3	6.3
Engine and shipbuilding.....	0.9	6.7	3.2	4.4	5.3	4.3
Other metal-work.....	8.8	14.5	13.3	15.4	18.2	16.4
Paper and printing.....	35.2	37.6	38.0	38.3	37.3	37.8
China and earthenware.....	42.6	51.9	48.3	47.6	49.1	48.2
Wood.....	3.7	5.5	4.8	3.6	4.2	3.3
Other factories.....	38.7	44.5	39.4	39.7	41.1	41.2
All factories.....	32.3	35.2	34.0	34.3	35.9	32.8

<sup>1</sup> Quoted from workmen's compensation statistics for corresponding years issued by the Home Office, in TRADES UNION CONGRESS: *Equal Pay, Memorandum of Evidence to the Royal Commission* (London, The Victoria House Printing Co. Ltd., 1945).

The proportion of women engaged in operative trades remained also noticeably stable. The following are the figures for 1924 and 1935<sup>1</sup>:

	Percentage of females to total number employed	
	1924	1935
Operatives in:		
Factory trade.....	37.5	37.5
Non-factory trade.....	0.5	0.5

On the other hand, women's employment made some headway as regards administrative, technical and clerical work. The figures given below relate to the years 1924 and 1935<sup>2</sup>:

	Percentage of females to total number employed	
	1924	1935
Administrative, technical and clerical staff in:		
Factory trade.....	27.3	31.5
Non-factory trade.....	10.8	14.9

From statistical data, taken from the 1931 census for England and Wales, these general remarks regarding women factory workers seem to hold good as far as the female labour force, as a whole, is concerned. From 1921 to 1931, the proportion of women to men workers rose only slightly, from 29.5 to 29.7 per cent. During this period the percentage of women gainfully occupied, as compared to the total female population, increased from 25.6 to 26.9 per cent. But, as appears from table IV<sup>3</sup>, there was, from 1921 to 1931, a slight decrease in the proportion of women in most industrial groups, except in the mixed group classified under "other industries and industries not stated".

The remarkable stability in the proportion of women employed in factories may be assigned to the strict demarcation between men's and women's work. During the inter-war period there is little evidence of direct displacement of men by women in industry.

In most industries, there was however an increase in the number of women employed; this was generally due to the growth of mass production methods and to the introduction of machinery requiring only light repetitive work. This is characteristic of the newer and expanding industries and may be the inevitable result of technical progress. It should be borne in mind in this connection that, whenever possible, employers seem to have taken advantage of the lower rates of pay for women to widen the range of women's work

<sup>1</sup> T. U. C.: *Equal Pay, Memorandum of Evidence to the Royal Commission, op. cit.*, table II using the final summary table of the Fifth Census of Production (Board of Trade).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> Cf. *International Labour Review*, Vol. XXXII, No. 6, Dec. 1935, p. 851, "Statistics of Occupied Population in Different Countries (Great Britain)", quoting the official findings of the 1931 census for England and Wales.

TABLE IV. PROPORTION OF WOMEN EMPLOYED, BY INDUSTRIAL GROUP, 1921-1931

	Percentage of females in each industrial group 1921 and 1931	
	1921	1931
Agriculture and fishing . . . . .	7.5	5.6
Mining and quarrying . . . . .	0.7	0.6
Manufactures, building and construction, etc. <sup>1</sup>	28.4	28.2
Transport, communication . . . . .	3.2	3.2
Commerce and finance . . . . .	32.6	29.8
Public administration and defence (including Post Office) . . . . .	26.5	24.4
Professional service <sup>2</sup> . . . . .	44.5	44.5
Personal service <sup>3</sup> . . . . .	74.4	71.5
Other industries and industries not stated . . . . .	17.3	22.3
	29.5	29.7

<sup>1</sup> Including treatment of non-metalliferous mine and quarry products.

<sup>2</sup> Including entertainments and sports.

<sup>3</sup> Including hotels and restaurants, but excluding Government and local authority.

by the breaking down of operations so as to reduce their labour costs.<sup>1</sup> This fact may explain also the increase in the numbers and proportion of the female labour force as related to the total labour force in the economic depression.

The numbers of women workers increased generally between 1921 and 1931. While there were 5,037,000 women over 14 years

TABLE V. NUMBER OF WOMEN EMPLOYED IN SELECTED OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS, SHOWING INCREASE, 1921-1931

Occupational group	1921	1931
Commercial (not clerks) . . . . .	504,264	604,833
Clerks, typists, draughtsmen . . . . .	429,921	579,945
Professional (not clerical) . . . . .	348,461	389,359
Warehouse . . . . .	128,710	155,594
Metals—electricians . . . . .	98,244	124,565
Paper, cardboard, printing and photogravure . . . . .	85,319	101,952
Painters, decorators . . . . .	25,676	39,091
Brick, pottery, glass . . . . .	20,931	25,418

gainfully occupied in 1921, their number was 5,606,000 in 1931. An increase in the numbers of women employed is noticeable in most occupational groups, except such groups as agriculture, mining, building, etc., where women's labour is not generally

<sup>1</sup> Cf. T. U. C.: *Equal Pay, Memorandum of Evidence to the Royal Commission*, *op. cit.*

extensive. Increases in numbers occurred particularly among the occupational groups shown in table V.<sup>1</sup>

The number of women employed in factories increased slightly from 1,726,000 in 1913 to 1,967,000 in 1938; after the sharp rise of the war, it had fallen to 2,158,000 in 1919, and decreased promptly to 1,781,000 in 1924.<sup>2</sup>

TABLE VI. TOTAL NUMBER OF FEMALE FACTORY WORKERS  
EMPLOYED, 1913-1938

1913.....	1,726,000	1929.....	1,899,000
1919.....	2,158,000	1933.....	1,792,000
1924.....	1,781,000	1938.....	1,961,000

All these factual data lead to the general conclusion that women's employment evolved during the inter-war period along two main lines: the number of women workers and their relative importance in the total labour force expanded (*a*) in the engineering trades, and (*b*) in the clerical, commercial and professional fields.

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<sup>1</sup> Mary Agnes HAMILTON, *op. cit.*, Appendix (reproducing data from census of 1931).

<sup>2</sup> Quoted from workmen's compensation statistics issued by the Home Office in T. U. C.: *Equal Pay, Memorandum of Evidence to the Royal Commission, op. cit.*

# CHAPTER I

## WOMEN IN THE LABOUR MARKET

### WARTIME EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS

The outbreak of the Second World War created new demands for labour, caused some dislocation in many fields of employment and resulted in a sharp increase in the number of women registered as unemployed. These consequences followed partly because female labour was mainly employed in consumption industries (cotton, hosiery, clothing, the distributive trades, hotel industries, etc.), and an immediate result of the transition from peace to war was a curtailment of production in these industries and an inevitable expansion of the industries vital to the war effort.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, as long as there were unemployed men on the register, the tendency was to avoid any substitution of men by women in war industries.

Not until early in 1941 was it necessary to draw to any extent on women; and although the number of women workers had increased in certain industries, they were employed in jobs that they traditionally filled and the question of replacement of men by women had practically not arisen; the Ministry of Labour Training Centres had not been used to an appreciable extent to train women for skilled and semi-skilled jobs as substitutes for men.

In 1941, the plans for enhancing war production began to result in large demands for labour, as new factories and extensions came into full operation, and measures were taken to bring about a substantial increase of women workers. Methods of recruitment and control of womanpower were initiated in March 1941, when the Minister of Labour and National Service decided on the principle of registering women for employment. There followed the registration of younger women by successive age classes, youngest first. The control of womanpower was gradually extended as the increasing requirements of the services and war industry made further measures of mobilisation necessary.

The unemployment figures of the earlier years of the war reflect a growing demand for women workers. On 17 March 1941 there

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. "The Employment of Women Workers during the War", in *International Labour Review*, Vol. XL, No. 6, Dec. 1939, pp. 802-805.

were still 185,640 women 18 years of age or over wholly unemployed in Great Britain and Northern Ireland which, however, represented a decrease from 269,258 on 11 December 1939. From then on, unemployment among women continued to decrease as the demand for women in war work and as substitutes for men grew, and by 12 April 1943, 22,390 women were unemployed; by 19 July 1943, 17,742; by October 1943, 18,604.<sup>1</sup>

At the middle of 1944, the total number of women in Great Britain of "working age", that is, 14 to 64 years inclusive, was about 17¼ million, and of these about 7,650,000 were in the auxiliary services, full-time civil defence or industry—this excludes those employed in private domestic service. About 900,000 of them were in part-time employment. In addition, there were a number of women aged 65 and over in paid employment.

The above figure of numbers employed takes no account of voluntary unpaid work. A large number of married women who had domestic responsibilities and who were not in the labour market, were helping in the war effort as members of the various voluntary organisations such as the Women's Voluntary Services (about 1,000,000 members) or other organisations giving service in canteens, nursery schools and so forth and in part-time civil defence duties. Many women performed fire-guard duties in addition to industrial work. At the middle of 1944, the total number of women in Great Britain in the age groups covered by the National Insurance Acts, that is 14 to 59 years inclusive, was about 16 million, and of these 7,120,000 were in the auxiliary services, whole-time civil defence or industry—an increase of over 2¼ million since the beginning of the war. (On these figures two women working part-time are counted as equivalent to one whole-time worker.) Counting each woman working part-time separately, the increase is nearly 2¾ million. The remaining 8.9 million consisted mainly of girls at school and of married women with domestic responsibilities, such as the care of young children and invalids, and housekeeping for men and women engaged directly in the war effort. There were over 9 million children under 14 to be looked after.<sup>2</sup>

The increase in the number of women in the services or in industrial employment was achieved by a reduction of 271,000 in the number unemployed and by a net addition of over 2 million women not previously in industrial employment. Practically half of these additional women were mobilised in the year 1942. The majority of women mobilised had been aged 18-40.

<sup>1</sup> *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, Jan. 1941, pp. 12-13; May 1941, p. 80; May 1943, p. 66; Aug. 1943, p. 114; Jan. 1944, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Statistics relating to the War Effort of the United Kingdom* (Cmd. 6564, H.M. Stationery Office, London, Nov. 1944).



The number of men and women in the services or in industrial employment reached its highest level towards the end of 1943, by which time labour was fully mobilised.

At the peak:

(1) Taking single women aged 18 to 40, the total in industry, civil defence and the forces was about 3,000,000, that is, over 90 per cent. of all single women in the group.

(2) Taking single women aged 14 to 59, the total in industry, civil defence and the forces was nearly 4,000,000, including 80 per cent. of all single women aged 18 to 59.

(3) Taking married women and widows aged 18 to 40 with no young children the total in industry, civil defence and the forces was about 1,355,000, that is, nearly 81 per cent. of the age group.

The utilisation of womanpower was high; witness the proportion of women fully employed—7,120,000 at mid-1944 against 14,896,000 men—that is to say, about 48 women for every 100 men.

In addition to the net increase in the numbers employed, there was transference on a very large scale from the less essential industries to munitions work and the basic industries.

The changes between mid-1939 and September 1943, in the numbers of women in employment were as follows<sup>1</sup>:

Auxiliary services.....	+	470,000
Civil defence services.....	+	66,000
Industry:		
Munitions industries.....	+	1,430,000
Basic industries (agriculture, mining, national and local Government service, public utilities, transport, and food, drink and tobacco)....	+	762,000
All other industries and services (dis- tributive trades, manufactures and miscellaneous services).....	-	300,000
Total industry.....	+	1,892,000
Grand total.....	+	2,428,000

The proportion of women in industry rose for each of the three main groups as follows:

	Mid-1939	Sept. 1943
Munitions.....	16 per cent.	37 per cent.
Basic industries.....	15 per cent.	28 per cent.
Other industries and services....	37 per cent.	51 per cent.

In all industries the proportion of women workers increased to a remarkable extent, even in industrial fields where the employment

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

of women had been extensive for a long time. The following table<sup>1</sup> gives details of the changes that occurred in the number and proportion of women employed in industry.

TABLE VII. CHANGES IN THE NUMBER AND PROPORTION OF WOMEN EMPLOYED, BY INDUSTRY, JUNE 1939-JUNE 1944

Industry or service	June 1939		June 1944		Increase (+) or decrease (—) in no. of females employed (in 1000's)
	No. of females <sup>1</sup> (in 1000's)	Percent. of total number of work-people <sup>2</sup>	No. of females <sup>1</sup> (in 1000's)	Percent. of total number of work-people <sup>2</sup>	
Metal and chemical industries <sup>3</sup> .....	506	16.3	1,851	36.6	+ 1,345
Agriculture.....	67	6.0	184	16.2	+ 117
Mining.....	5	0.6	13	1.6	+ 8
National Government service.....	123	22.8	495	48.7	+ 372
Local Government service.....	326	38.6	468	59.3	+ 142
Gas, water and electricity.....	17	7.1	32	16.7	+ 15
Transport, shipping and fishing.....	51	4.0	212	16.9	+ 161
Food, drink and tobacco.....	263	40.2	240	47.1	— 23
Building and civil engineering.....	16	1.2	23	3.7	+ 5
Textiles.....	601	60.0	405	64.7	— 196
Clothing.....	449	76.5	284	81.4	— 165
Boots and shoes.....	57	34.6	43	40.2	— 14
Other manufactures <sup>4</sup> .....	440	30.5	414	43.2	— 26
Distributive trades.....	999	34.6	956	49.6	— 43
Other services <sup>5</sup> .....	917	48.6	977	69.2	+ 60
Total.....	4,837	27.0	6,597	39.4	+ 1,760

<sup>1</sup> Women working part-time are included throughout, two being counted as one unit.

<sup>2</sup> Females aged 14-59 plus males aged 14-64.

<sup>3</sup> Metal manufacture, engineering, motors, aircraft and other vehicles, shipbuilding and ship-repairing, metal-goods manufacture, chemicals, explosives, oil, etc., industries.

<sup>4</sup> Leather, wood, paper, bricks, tiles, pottery, glass and miscellaneous manufactures.

<sup>5</sup> Commerce, banking, insurance, finance; professional services; entertainment; hotels, restaurants, etc.; laundries and cleaning.

The figures show that outstanding increases took place in the relative importance of female labour in the metal and chemical industries, in agriculture and horticulture, in transport and in national and local Government services.

Except from such industries as agriculture, mining, public utilities (gas, water and electricity), transport, shipping and fishing, building and civil engineering, where the proportion of women workers has never been substantial, mainly on account of the

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

nature of the work (although their number increased many times during the war), women made up in June 1944, when employment was close to its peak, a substantial proportion of the total labour force in the main industrial fields, ranging from 36.6 per cent. (metal and chemical industries) to 81.4 per cent. (clothing).

#### METHODS OF RECRUITMENT, DISTRIBUTION AND CONTROL OF WOMANPOWER

The recruitment of women in Great Britain in wartime was effected by the use of the Minister of Labour and National Service's compulsory powers under Regulation 58A of the Emergency Powers (Defence) Act, 1940, and by the National Service (No. 2) Act, 1941. Control over the distribution of women in employment was achieved by the scheduling of establishments engaged on essential work under the Essential Work Orders (these arrangements apply equally to men and women). The Orders controlling and restricting the engagement of women workers which ensured that women obtain their jobs through local offices of the Ministry of Labour and National Service gave the Ministry control over the movement of women workers from one employment to another. The Notice of Termination of Employment Order (applicable to both men and women), by which the employers had to notify the local offices of the Ministry when their workers left, gave the Ministry control over those women employed in establishments and occupations not covered by an Essential Work Order.

In administering these various measures and in all other matters affecting the mobilisation of womanpower for the war effort the Minister of Labour and National Service was advised by an independent committee of representative women appointed in March 1941. The terms of reference of this committee were "to advise on questions affecting the recruitment and registration of women and the best methods of securing their services for the war effort". The committee of 10 members met regularly throughout the war under the chairmanship of the Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Labour and National Service.

#### *The Registration for Employment Order*

By an Order made under the Defence Regulations in March 1941—the Registration for Employment Order, 1941—the Minister of Labour and National Service took power to require persons to register particulars of themselves at a local office of the Ministry, or otherwise. This power could be used to require registration

of men and women by age classes, or to require the registration of men and women with special skill, *e.g.*, engineers. When suitable unemployed women and the many willing volunteers for war service had been recruited for the women's services and war industry, further steps of mobilisation were needed, and it was decided to proceed with the registration of women by age classes, youngest first. The first registrations of women took place in April and May 1941. Women born between 1921 and 1905 inclusive were registered in successive age classes. Younger women born in 1922 and 1923 and older women born 1904 to 1897 were subsequently registered. This completed the programme for the registration of women up to the age of 45. Subsequently, successive age classes of girls reaching the age of 18 were required to register since they became old enough to be considered for rational service. In the autumn of 1943, owing mainly to the demands arising from the aircraft programme, it became necessary to undertake a new programme for the registration of older women born between 1893 and 1896 inclusive, who were aged from 46 to 50 at the time of their registration. The desirability of extending the compulsory call-up to these older women was very fully debated in Parliament<sup>1</sup>, and a pledge was given that older women would not be called on until all younger women who were available had been used and that they would only be considered for work within daily travelling distance of their homes.

Supplementary to these general registrations of women, arrangements were made for special registrations of women with previous experience in the cotton industry and in the nursing profession. In September to October 1943 women born from 1888 to 1925 inclusive, who, for an aggregate period of six months or more, had been employed since January 1935 in any capacity in cotton, rayon, nylon spinning, doubling, winding or weaving establishments, including warehouses and packing departments, were required to register even if they had registered previously with their age classes. In April 1943 nurses were required to register under the Nurses and Midwives (Registration for Employment) Order, 1943.

While the procedure for the registration of women by age classes under the Registration for Employment Order remained the same as it was applied to successive age classes, the Minister's policy in the allocation of women who had registered changed with the varying requirements of the services and war production, and in general, the comb-out of women from domestic employment and

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<sup>1</sup> *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, Vol. 391, No. 97, col. 1797.

from less essential work grew more stringent as the manpower position became more difficult. When women were first registered in 1941, only those who were unoccupied and not engaged on necessary household duties were required to take war work, generally in their home areas. Later, an increasingly thorough comb-out of young unmarried women employed in less essential work was made in order to meet demands for women who could leave their homes to go to work in the congested munitions centres and the women's auxiliary services.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, married women engaged in domestic duties were considered for employment in their home areas.<sup>2</sup>

### *The National Service Act*

The National Service (No. 2) Act was passed in December 1941. The primary object of this Act was to enable the Minister to provide an adequate supply of women recruits for the expanding women's auxiliary services. Many of the younger women being dealt with under the Registration for Employment Order had volunteered for these services, as had many women not liable for compulsory service, but further recruits were needed, and it was thought desirable to extend to women the same protection as regards conscientious objection and postponement on hardship grounds as applied to men called up under the National Service Acts.<sup>3</sup>

Under this Act women were made liable to be called up for service in the auxiliary forces and civil defence forces as well as for specified jobs in industry. Married women and women with children of their own under 14 living with them were excepted from compulsory service under the Act, as were also women already in the women's services, nursing services and reserves. A Royal Proclamation issued on 18 December 1941 imposed liability for call-up upon women 21-30 years old. The first age classes to be called up were the 1920 and 1921 classes (January 1942).<sup>4</sup> The Acts were applied to further age classes, and by 1945 single women and widows in the six age classes 1918-1923 inclusive had been dealt with under the Acts. Women expressing a preference for the women's auxiliary services were allocated to whichever of the auxiliary services was most in need of recruits. Women called up who did not wish to serve in the armed forces had the opportunity

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<sup>1</sup> *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, Apr. 1943, p. 49.

<sup>2</sup> *Idem*, Sept. 1943, p. 125.

<sup>3</sup> *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, 5 Aug. 1943, cols. 2466-2467.

<sup>4</sup> *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, Jan. 1942, p. 6.

of opting between specified civil defence duties, including National Fire Service and Ambulance Service, and specified jobs in industry limited to a short list. In January 1942 they could opt, as far as industry was concerned, between the Royal Ordnance filling factories (first priority) or (second priority) agriculture, (including the Women's Land Army), domestic service in hospitals and certain similar institutions. Those opting for service in industry could be allocated where appropriate to training for war work at Government and emergency training centres. Whether they chose service in the auxiliary forces or in industry, women called up under the Act had to be prepared to serve away from home. Arrangements might be made for conscientious objectors and for cases which involved exceptional hardship. The majority of the women called up under the Act had already been required to register under the Registration for Employment Order, and many had already been allocated to some form of industrial war work.

The position of these women was reviewed under the Act in the same way as other women. Those found to be engaged in vital war work or service as defined in a special list were not called up for compulsory service; others engaged on work of importance to the war effort not in this list could have their calling up deferred for a limited period of time to enable a replacement to be found.

Cases of exceptional personal hardship, including hardship to the employer, were considered individually, as in the case of men called up to the forces, in the light of decisions given by the umpire under the National Service (Postponement Certificate) Regulations.

#### *Withdrawal of Women from Less Important Work*

Early in the registration of women for war service it became necessary to call on women to leave less important work for war work, and, as the mobilisation continued, withdrawal became necessary to an increasing extent and the list of industries and services from which women were not withdrawn was reviewed and curtailed. In some industries, such as boots and shoes, clothing and hosiery, textiles, furniture and pottery, substantial releases of men and women workers were obtained under concentration schemes by which minimum essential production was carried out by "nucleus firms" employing wherever possible the older workers and those least suitable for transfer to war work. In these industries only a relatively small proportion of the younger women workers remained to be withdrawn following their registration under the Registration for Employment Order and National Service Acts. In other important industries, in the professions, in clerical employ-

ments and in the distributive trades, the release of women for war work was obtained by special arrangements negotiated with each industry and adapted to its special needs. These arrangements, which became increasingly strict as the mobilisation proceeded, specified the age classes of women who would be considered for withdrawal following their registration for national service. In general, few industries and services, other than those on work of first importance, were permitted to retain young women liable for call-up under the National Service Acts, and the majority of industries and services not engaged on direct war work were expected to release "mobile" single women up to 30 or even 45 years of age.

It was a principle of all these arrangements for withdrawal that full-time workers should not be retained even on necessary and important work if they could be replaced by the part-time employment of women precluded by their domestic responsibilities from working long hours or far from their homes. It was also a principle that "mobile" women should be released for transfer to work of the highest urgency if they could be replaced by "immobile" women available for full-time work near their homes only.

The following are examples of the kind of arrangements made for the withdrawal of women by age classes. As early as October 1941 women aged 18-25 engaged in retail distribution were considered for withdrawal following registration under the Registration for Employment Act. In March 1942 arrangements were made for women in the 26-30 age groups employed in businesses wholly or mainly engaged in retail distribution (other than the food and coal trades, which had a greater degree of protection because of their wartime importance) to be withdrawn unless exceptionally they were found, after consideration by subcommittees especially set up for such purposes, to be "pivotal".

In December 1942 a further withdrawal of women from retail distribution was agreed upon and decided by the Minister of National Service and the President of the Board of Trade. In addition to the withdrawal which had already taken place, women in the age groups 31-35 inclusive were to be considered for withdrawal from those trades; in specified sections of these industries, the withdrawal was to extend to those in the age groups 37-46 inclusive. A deferment up to six months was granted only to women whose removal would result in the closing down of the business or branch of business in which they were employed.

Withdrawal of women of the 20-25 age groups from the clothing industry, as well as from the woollen and worsted industry, was arranged in November 1941, and this was followed by further withdrawals from these industries which were also required to

release men and women workers under concentration schemes. Similar special arrangements applied to clerical staffs, including those in the national and local Government service. In general, in each case the women to be withdrawn were those who were mobile, or, if immobile, lived in areas where there was an urgent local demand for war workers. For example, in December 1941, Government departments were requested to release for service in the auxiliary forces or industry as many mobile women as possible between the age of 20 and 30 who were employed in clerical and subclerical classes, other than those with special qualifications.<sup>1</sup>

Special arrangements were made, in consultation with the universities and other educational institutions, for younger women liable for national service who wished to take courses of training. The general effect of these arrangements was that a girl could only obtain deferment of national service if she was taking an approved course of training, and if she pursued her studies satisfactorily. In the majority of cases the student was expected to begin the course younger than would have been customary in peacetime and to complete it in the academic year in which she reached her 20th birthday. Further postponement of national service could only be obtained if there was exceptional personal hardship. Certain courses of special value to the war effort, *e.g.*, medical courses, courses in labour management and social welfare were, however, left open to older women with national service obligations.

Among other special schemes was one under which the cases of all young women engaged in the commercial theatre and other entertainment industries were reviewed. Considerable numbers were withdrawn for the services and vital war work, while others, as a condition of being allowed to continue to use their special qualifications in their profession, were required to give a period of service to the organisations responsible for the entertainment of the troops and of war workers.

During the difficult period of 1943, when large numbers of young women were required to man aircraft firms in congested areas where all local reserves of labour had been exhausted, it became so important to obtain additional young women suitable for transfer that munitions firms in less congested centres were asked to release mobile women who could be replaced by "immobile" women. This became necessary because the non-munitions industries, owing to withdrawals, had no longer any substantial numbers of "mobile" women who could be called upon.

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<sup>1</sup> *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, Dec. 1941, p. 233.



*Control of Engagement*

With the recruitment of large numbers of women from less essential work to war industries and services it became increasingly necessary to ensure that those who had been allocated to the job where they were most usefully engaged in the national interest did not change their employment to less important work without the knowledge of the Ministry of Labour and National Service. Women engaged in most types of industrial war work were, like men workers, subject to restrictions under the Essential Work Orders<sup>1</sup> which, in general, required the permission of a national service officer to be given before a worker could leave or be discharged. A considerable number of women were, however, engaged in important work, such as domestic employment in hospitals, not covered by an Essential Work Order and these were free to leave their jobs and obtain new ones without control. The Employment of Women (Control of Engagement) Order, effective as from 6 February 1942, was designed to fill this gap and to ensure that any younger women who changed their jobs in wartime were allocated to the form of employment or war service where they were most urgently required in the national interest.

Under this Order<sup>2</sup>, women aged 20-30 inclusive were prohibited from obtaining employment and employers were forbidden to engage or seek to engage women other than through a local office of the Ministry of Labour or an agency approved by the Ministry. The prohibition of seeking to engage precluded employers from approaching women in these age classes by advertisement or in any other way. Employers were made responsible, when engaging women, for ascertaining that they were not covered by the Order. Certain categories of women were exempted from the Order; the most important was that of women who had young children of their own living with them. (This exception was made because these women, who were not compelled to undertake war work, might be prepared to volunteer for war service if left to make their own arrangements.) Certain employments were also exempted: agriculture, nursing and midwifery, teaching, whole-time employment in the various women's auxiliary services, as well as voluntary work. Provision was made for permits to be issued excepting from the Order any individual woman who in the national interest

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<sup>1</sup> Text of Essential Work (General Provisions) Order 1941, S.R. and O. 1941, No. 302, in *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, Mar. 1941, pp. 69-71; see also I.L.O.: *Labour Supply and National Defence*, Studies and Reports, Series C, No. 23 (Montreal, 1941), pp. 56-57. For the Essential Work Orders, cf. various issues of the *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, 1941, 1942 and 1943.

<sup>2</sup> Statutory Rules and Orders, 1942, No. 100; *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, Feb. 1942, p. 52.

should be free to seek employment by direct application. These permits were issued to women with special qualifications for important professions in which recruitment was best left to individual initiative and to disabled women who required a wider and freer choice of employment. Provision was also made in the Order for the approval of employment agencies to place women covered by the Order, and certain professional associations with valuable experience in placing their members were approved so that they could help in the allocation of them.

In May 1942, an order amending the Employment of Women (Control of Engagement) Order, 1942<sup>1</sup>, extended the scope of the Order to include women 18-19 years of age, while additional categories of employment were excluded from the provisions of the Order: (1) employment in a professional capacity of any person whose name was on the medical register; (2) dentists registered under the Dentists Act, 1921; (3) members of the police force (as defined in the Police Pensions Act, 1921).

As further age classes of women were registered for war service it became desirable to extend the scope of the Control of Engagement Order. Consequently, control was further extended to women up to the age of 40 inclusive by a new Order effective as from 22 February 1943. This consolidated and amended the earlier Orders and superseded certain restrictions on the engagement of women in these age groups, employed in the building, civil engineering, electrical installation and general undertakings formerly imposed under the Undertakings (Restriction on Engagement) Order, 1941<sup>2</sup>, which had been introduced primarily to control the engagement of male workers in the munitions, engineering and building industries.

#### PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT AND OUT-WORKING SCHEMES

When the shortage of workers for factory employment in most industrial districts became serious, attention was given to the employment of women who could not, on account of their home duties, take full-time employment in their home areas, but would be willing to work regularly part time, and of those whose services could only be used if work could be brought to their homes. The first step was to encourage employers to develop schemes for the employment of local married women on a part-time basis in their factories and workshops. The next step was to obtain the decen-

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<sup>1</sup> *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, May 1942, p. 104.

<sup>2</sup> Statutory Rules and Orders, 1943, No. 142.

tralisation of suitable forms of production to depots in districts where women were available and, in some cases, to the women's homes.

### *Part-Time Employment*

Private firms started to employ part-time workers on a rather large scale as early as the end of 1941. At that time<sup>1</sup> already nearly a hundred industrial establishments in London successfully operated schemes for part-time labour. In July 1942, when women 43-46 years of age were called up for full-time work under the Registration for Employment Order, it became apparent that the only substantial remaining reserve of womanpower was women with domestic responsibilities who were unable to perform full-time work. Part-time women workers were first recruited in industrial areas of acute labour shortage, where they were employed in war industries as an additional labour supply and in work not directly connected with the war effort, in order to release men and women for war service. They found employment in a wide variety of clerical jobs, in retail trade, in essential domestic work, on transportation work, in the clothing industry, in general and electrical engineering work, including radio manufacture, in air-frame manufacture and various other industries, in agriculture and food production. In June 1942, it was estimated that 250,000 women were employed on part time<sup>2</sup>, and their number increased to 650,000 in August 1943.<sup>3</sup> By the middle of 1944 about 900,000 women were doing part-time work.<sup>4</sup>

In July 1942 the Ministry of Labour and National Service issued a leaflet dealing with the planning of part-time work for women, in which the various problems and suggestions were briefly formulated<sup>5</sup>, and which summarised the various measures taken in order to encourage the employment of part-time workers.

The Ministry of Labour and National Service received an assurance from representatives of employers and workers that they would support the introduction of part-time schemes during the war emergency; the Ministry also had the co-operation of the departments interested in production in obtaining the maximum

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<sup>1</sup> *Engineering Bulletin*, No. 11, Apr. 1942, pp. 87-90.

<sup>2</sup> British Information Services (N.Y.), Press Release, 29 June 1942.

<sup>3</sup> *Economist*, 28 Aug. 1943, p. 280.

<sup>4</sup> *Statistics relating to the War Effort of the United Kingdom*, *op. cit.*, Appendix B

<sup>5</sup> MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND NATIONAL SERVICE: *Planning for Part-time Work* (P.L. 105/1942). See also MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND NATIONAL SERVICE and MINISTRY OF PRODUCTION: "Making the Best of Part-time. Practical Suggestions in the Light of Experience", in *Production and Engineering Bulletin*, Vol. 2, No. 11, Oct. 1943, pp. 512-515.

development of part-time schemes. By a special concession, employers and workers were relieved from the payment of the unemployment insurance contribution when the employment began on or after 3 September 1939, did not involve more than 30 hours a week and the services rendered as such would not, but for the circumstances of the war, ordinarily be performed by persons rendering not more than 30 hours' service a week; health and pensions insurance contributions were still payable.<sup>1</sup> Part-time workers receiving an injury arising out of or in the course of their employment were entitled to compensation in accordance with the provisions of the Workmen's Compensation Acts. Part-time workers who were not called upon to pay an unemployment insurance contribution were excluded from the operation of the Essential Work Orders which placed restrictions on dismissals and resignations of labour.<sup>2</sup> This was intended to remove the doubts of women who wanted to volunteer for part-time work but were afraid that they would be unable to leave their jobs if changes in their domestic circumstances made it difficult for them to continue. In order to encourage married women to undertake paid war work, arrangements were made by which an earned income of £80 a year was free of income tax.

Part-time work soon spread from the main munitions centres to most industrial or commercial towns—even those where there was little or no direct munitions work—as more young mobile women were withdrawn from munitions and other essential work in areas where local married women, full and part time, were available as substitutes, and transferred to the munitions centres where all local reserves of labour, including part-timers, had been fully used. Part-time workers could be and were employed in almost all operations in munitions factories that were suitable for women full-time workers, but they were most successful in work which was repetitive, which could be learnt quickly and which did not need to be continuous. An electrical firm employing a considerable number of part-timers investigated the record of part-timers as compared with full-timers employed in their various branches. Their enquiry showed that part-time workers achieved about the same degree of productivity on simple manual work as full-timers, except in certain departments where a high degree of fatigue was involved and where part-timers could achieve a slightly better average productivity because of their shorter hours. In other departments where a greater degree of skill was involved, *e.g.*, in

<sup>1</sup> Unemployment Insurance (Emergency Powers) (Amendment No. 2) Regulations, 1942, dated 2 April 1942.

<sup>2</sup> Essential Work (General Provisions) (Part-time Workers Exclusion) Order, 1942, dated 11 April 1942, Statutory Rules and Orders, 1942, No. 687.

assembly work, the productivity of part-timers was somewhat lower than that of full-timers. They found that in general part-time workers were rather better timekeepers than married women working full time, because their hours were adjusted to meet their domestic responsibilities. On the other hand, they found that there was a very large turnover among part-time workers, which was to be expected, since the part-time workers were in almost all cases women with heavy domestic responsibilities, and any change in their domestic circumstances, such as an illness in their home, might make it necessary for them to leave work for a time. Part-time workers were employed in a great variety of trades and occupations. They worked in agriculture as well as in routine clerical work, in laundries, textile and other factories, as well as most of the essential services and on direct war work in the munitions industries.

One of the principal obstacles to the development of part-time employment in munitions factories in continuous operation was the difficulty of fitting the part-timers into the scheme of full-time hours, and in particular balancing the night shift, which was unpopular with women with domestic responsibilities. Another obstacle to the development of part-time work was the need for organising the available transport to meet the special circumstances of part-timers travelling to work at mid-day at a cost which part-time workers could afford from their lower wages. In districts where it was necessary to call on married women with children to come forward as volunteers for part-time work, lack of provision for the care of children might be an obstacle and it was frequently necessary to extend the accommodation in day nurseries or the provision of school meals for older children.

Part-time workers were generally paid the flat hourly rate payable to full-time workers, both on time work and on piece work. When the rate was not a time rate and the unit of production was so large that it could not be completed on a part shift, a special group bonus system of payment sometimes solved the difficulties: the production bonus was divided among all the part-time workers who contributed to the completion of the job. Disagreements over the wage arrangements were discussed and settled through the ordinary negotiating machinery of the industry. For employment of part-time women workers outside the normal working hours of the undertaking, the permission of the factory inspector had to be obtained.

Night work on a part-time basis involved great difficulties and was rarely found, although, in some cases, when the machines had to be worked at night, it was possible to employ part-time employees

to work on full shift for some nights only. Part-time day shifts were organised on a wide variety of schedules. The two part-day shifts were most usual with or without a mid-day interval. When a shift of 5 hours was worked, there was a statutory rest interval of 10 minutes in the course of the shift. In many firms there was a change-over between the morning and afternoon shifts at weekly or other intervals, but some firms preferred to keep women always on the same shift, or sometimes allowed them to choose the morning or afternoon shift, as suited their circumstances. Many engaged women in pairs and left to them to arrange which shift each would work. Evening shifts were generally popular; they were worked from 3 or 4 p.m. to 9 p.m.; 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.; 5.30 p.m. to 10 p.m.; 6 p.m. to 9, 9.30 or 10 p.m.; 6.15 p.m. to 10.15 p.m.; or 6 p.m. to midnight. Part-time workers were frequently found working a reduced day—for example, from 9 or 10 a.m. to 3, 4, 4.30 or 5 p.m.—or part-week—2, 3, or 4 days a week, sometimes on alternate days. Some firms elaborated systems covering several weeks; a number of unusual shifts were found successful in varying circumstances such as: relief shifts, each full-time worker being allowed one half-day a week for shopping; weekend shifts to relieve hard-pressed weekly workers; and occasional rush shifts, when a bottleneck had arisen.

As an alternative to part-time work some firms met the problems of women with domestic responsibilities by what was known as "controlled absence". The principle of this was to allow the women a certain amount of free time per week, e.g., one shift per week, for shopping and necessary domestic duties.

### *Home Work and Out-Working Schemes*

Part-time employment developed so rapidly in most munitions centres that all available local married women were soon employed, and firms needing additional labour found it desirable to organise new forms of part time and homework, taking suitable work from the factories in congested industrial areas to people of neighbouring villages and small towns who could not travel to war work but were glad to help in their own district. According to local conditions, three principal schemes of out-work were evolved: (1) small industrial undertakings were transferred to districts where the labour was available; (2) firms hired halls and other premises in suitable centres and opened small branch works, known sometimes as "village workshops", and manned by local people; (3) arrangements

were made so that people did the work in their homes in their own time.<sup>1</sup>

Some units were manned by full-time workers giving up their spare time, others by civil defence workers in their off-duty periods, or while they were standing by; the remainder were staffed mainly by local housewives.

The work decentralised in this way ranged over a wide variety of engineering operations, from simple jobs for individual home workers to more elaborate operations which had to be carried out by groups. The use of this type of labour, when carefully planned and organised, saved many hours of work of full-time employees in the factories, who were available for more important work. Some war production firms using the services of country housewives, tied to their homes, succeeded in saving 3,290 hours a week, equivalent to the work of 70 full-time employees on a 47-hour shift.<sup>2</sup>

In 1943 for instance, 270 part-time and out-working schemes were known to be in operation in the London and the southeastern region alone; in the Midlands region it was estimated that more than 55,000 hours' work a week were obtained in this way, which represented a saving of over 1,000 full-time employees.<sup>3</sup>

Output per operator in some workshops was stated to be at least equal to that in the parent factory, or even higher. In village workshops all the processes, except the final ones, could sometimes be carried out, especially in the machine-tool industry.<sup>4</sup>

Simple and efficient methods of distribution, inspection and control of out-working were tried. Heavy packages might be distributed to the farms and cottages, while women fetched the lighter ones themselves and returned the completed projects to the factories through the village distributing depot or "agencies" established at convenient centres. The work was controlled by means of a number of simple forms.<sup>5</sup>

Utilisation of labour according to this method proved efficient and was encouraged by the Ministries concerned as a wartime necessity. Firms planning out-working were urged to consult the officers of the regional boards with whom they were normally in touch, so that unnecessary competition with other firms in placing work in the same non-industrial or regional area might be avoided; the Regional Controllers of the Ministry of Production acted in

<sup>1</sup> *Production and Engineering Bulletin*, Vol. 2, No. 4, Jan.-Feb. 1943, pp. 169-174; No. 8, June-July 1943, pp. 372-373.

<sup>2</sup> "Outworking Increases Output", in *Production and Engineering Bulletin*, Vol. 2, No. 4, Jan.-Feb. 1943, pp. 169-174.

<sup>3</sup> *Production and Engineering Bulletin*, Vol. 2, No. 8, June-July 1943, p. 372.

<sup>4</sup> "Producing Centre Drills in a Village Workshop", in *idem*, Vol. 2, No. 11, Oct. 1943, p. 496.

<sup>5</sup> *Idem*, Vol. 2, No. 10, Sept. 1943, p. 460.

this respect as the co-ordinating authorities for the establishment of out-working schemes.<sup>1</sup> The Ministry of Production published a leaflet to assist employers arranging out-work schemes.

It was estimated in July 1944, that 40,000 persons in Great Britain were contributing to the war effort as out-workers.<sup>2</sup> Certain particulars regarding the conditions of employment of out-workers were given in the House of Commons.<sup>3</sup> Conditions in these village workshops were controlled by the provisions of the Factories Act and the premises were subject to inspection by factory inspectors and local authorities as provided by that Act; conditions in homes where out-work was carried on were subject to inspection and control by local authorities. The Ministries concerned issued a special warning that types of work which required special health precautions should not be given out. Out-workers were not subject to unemployment insurance unless they were employed under conditions which constituted a contract of service, and this was not usually the case. They were covered by the National Health Insurance Acts, but were excluded from the scope of the Workmen's Compensation Act.

#### RECRUITMENT AND DISTRIBUTION OF TECHNICAL AND PROFESSIONAL STAFF

The recruitment and distribution of female technical staff created special problems for two main categories of women: (1) those with higher technical qualifications, who were recruited mostly along peacetime lines or through special registers maintained by the Ministry of Labour and National Service and intended for both men and women; (2) technical personnel working in an assistant capacity, and urgently needed because of the drafting of men for the armed forces and because of the expansion of industrial production. Arrangements were accordingly made

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 457. In this article is given a list of operations which were successfully carried on through out-working schemes; electrical switch assembly, gear-teeth frazing; filing and polishing parts for bomb racks; hand lapping of gap and slip gauges; assembly and gauging of primers and fuses; sharpening woodsaws and metal-band saws; adjusting clockwork mechanism following time check; resetting magazine springs; wrapping carbon rods (for dry batteries); sorting nuts, bolts and screws; rodding carbon rings; filing and frazing pressings (prior to assembly); sorting and examining stampings; soldering filters for tanks; assembling oxygen breathing apparatus; light machine work on parts of fuses; eye-binding machine work on electrical wiring; bakelite moulding; frazing copper plugs; pressing electric cable clips; nut tapping; construction of aircraft bulkheads; deburring of ball and roller bearing cages; fettling of bronze gun castings; sorting of mica discs of sparking plugs; work on jerricans; fitting and assembling cupola and central floor section of airframes; construction of oil seals; battery assembly.

<sup>2</sup> *Idem*, Vol. 3, No. 20, July 1944, p. 323.

<sup>3</sup> *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, 11 July 1944, col. 1583.



whereby women with educational qualifications or good capacities were recruited for technical assistant work and given a short period of training, if necessary. Moreover, women students were the object of emergency measures which made them rapidly available for work in industry or with the services, and at the same time allowed them, under certain restrictions, to qualify for technical or professional work. Under the Employment of Women (Control of Engagement) Order, 1942<sup>1</sup>, women workers up to the age of 41 were not permitted as a rule to seek employment or to be engaged for employment otherwise than through local employment exchanges or approved employment agencies. However, women with special qualifications were exempted from the provisions of the Order subject to their securing a permit from the Ministry of Labour; an amendment made to the Order in May 1942 excluded also from its scope the employment in a professional capacity of women whose names were on the Medical Register or who were registered under the Dentists Acts (1879 and 1921)<sup>2</sup>, and teachers were exempted from the operation of the original Order.

Women with qualifications of a technical or professional nature might find employment through the customary professional channels approved by the Ministry of Labour, such as the University Appointments Boards and other special placing agencies. Suitably qualified persons (men and women) were recruited for wartime posts in Government departments or in firms engaged on work of national importance, from special registers maintained by the Ministry of Labour, such as the Central (Technical and Scientific) Register for persons possessing technical and scientific qualifications, including mechanical, electrical and civil engineers, architects, quantity surveyors, valuers, chemists, biologists, physicists and mathematicians. Persons of professional, administrative, managerial or executive experience and qualifications were enrolled on the Appointments Register, which had offices throughout the country, and women on this Register were placed in employment in higher posts or allotted to specialist entry commissions in the women's services.<sup>3</sup>

To meet the demands for younger women capable of filling supervisory vacancies in technical departments, the Ministry of Labour and National Service opened, in May 1942, a section of the Appointments Register to be called the Women's Technical Service Register (W.T.S.R.). Women with educational qualifications (School Certificate or equivalent examination with credits in

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<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 21.

<sup>2</sup> *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, May 1942, p. 104.

<sup>3</sup> MINISTRY OF INFORMATION: *British Women at War*, distributed by the British Information Service, New York, Feb. 1944, p. 10.

mathematics, physics, or chemistry, or higher examinations in which one of these subjects is included) or with good workshop experience, aptitude for figures and ability to make useful dilutees on technical work were accepted on the Register, which was not, however, intended to be used to fill clerical vacancies or those demanding exceptional qualifications or skill. Firms with technical vacancies were invited to apply to the Appointments Offices for instructors in works training schools, junior draughtswomen, assistants in planning, production and progress departments, assistants in estimating and rate-fixing offices, motion and time-study workers, electrical technicians and testers, laboratory assistants for radio and other branches of research, assistants in mechanical testing and metallurgical departments, inspectors, examiners and assistant examiners for higher-grade work.<sup>1</sup>

The W.T.S.R. was successful in placing women in many posts as assistants in planning departments, as assistant rate-fixers, engine testers, employees in time and motion departments, employees for machineshop layout in line production, and technical assistants for airframe stress work and weight calculation.<sup>2</sup>

Most women enrolled in the W.T.S.R., even those with good educational qualifications, required training of some kind for a new job; this kind of specialised training was generally given by the firms. The women might also be asked to take special courses at Government training centres. These courses were arranged by the Ministry of Labour and National Service in co-operation with the Ministry of Education and included the basic course in workshop practice and the abridged draughtsmanship course, which gave instruction on the making of detailed drawings and on elementary principles of stress calculation and design. The intensive inspection course and the intensive engineering course, which were basic for work in almost any of the technical departments, included practical experience in machineshops, fitting shops, inspection departments and drawing offices; the practical electrical course covered the fundamental principles of electrical installation and testing.<sup>3</sup>

Young girls of 16 and 17 years of age who had a school certificate standard (with pass in mathematics) and who wished to become laboratory, technical or experimental assistants, were also dealt with by the Juvenile Department of the local office of the Ministry of Labour and National Service or by the local Juvenile Employment Bureau, which was in a position to advise the girls concerning

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<sup>1</sup> *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, May 1942, p. 105; *Engineering Bulletin*, No. 12, May 1942.

<sup>2</sup> *Labour Woman*, Feb. 1943, p. 17.

<sup>3</sup> Information communicated by the Ministry of Labour and National Service, May 1942.

their careers, to consider their interests from the broadest point of view and to arrange for their placing if this seemed desirable. The girls might also be interviewed at school by a representative of the local office or bureau. The training facilities described above were available to such girls, but they were not sent to training away from home.<sup>1</sup>

In February 1943, the Ministry of Labour and National Service asked women with a School Certificate pass or equivalent standard in mathematics, chemistry, physics or general science, who thought that their present occupation was not using their qualifications to the full, to enroll in the W.T.S.R. with a view to being transferred to appropriate technical work, after a period of training, if necessary, although in certain circumstances permission to transfer might be refused.<sup>2</sup> This resulted in a useful amount of upgrading of women in the war industries.

In 1942 pressure on womanpower made it necessary to impose restrictions on the higher education of women. University entrance was restricted to women who were able to satisfy the academic authorities of their intention to qualify for work of national importance such as teaching or approved forms of social service, and who were able to complete the work required for a university degree, diploma or certificate by the end of the academic year in which they reached the age of 20. Training at institutions other than universities was limited to courses providing professional qualifications which were considered essential in the national interest. Similar age restrictions were imposed, but one-year courses in these subjects were also open to women who proceeded to them immediately upon graduation. In all cases permission to continue study was conditional upon satisfactory progress.

The arrangements made for women students in 1942 were subsequently modified in the light of the national situation. In 1943 the conditions governing entrance to courses of study were in general made more stringent. Women under 18 were allowed to take a three-year course, and women under 19 a two-year course, of approved study provided that they could qualify within the time allowed. For the first time an age limit was imposed upon entry to courses in medicine, dentistry, veterinary science, and pharmacy, which had previously been exempt from restriction. Women were required to secure acceptance for admission to these courses by their 19th birthday, but, subject to satisfactory progress,

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<sup>1</sup> MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND NATIONAL SERVICE: *Government Department Technical and Scientific Vacancies for Girls* (P.L. 126/1943, July 1943).

<sup>2</sup> *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, Feb. 1943, p. 22.

were still allowed to complete the full training, which is normally of five years' duration.<sup>1</sup>

In the autumn of 1944 it proved possible to raise the age limit for entry to approved three-year courses of study to 19 years and 3 months and to allow students who had entered upon two-year courses of study in 1943 to have a further year. At the same time, in order to implement the provisions of the Education Act, 1944, the age restrictions on the entry of women to courses of training in preparation for the teaching profession were removed, and women of any age were allowed to take teachers' courses, provided that they could be released from their war work.<sup>2</sup>

It was estimated that these regulations did not appreciably limit the number of women entering upon approved courses. They necessitated, however, a general intensification of training. Many universities instituted a fourth term or extended the academic year in order to enable students to graduate within the time allowed.<sup>3</sup>

### *Openings for Higher Education*

In order to replenish the supply of persons capable of filling responsible posts in the professions, industry, agriculture and commerce, plans were put forward by the Government to provide facilities for further education or training beyond the secondary school standard. Courses will be available in professional, commercial and industrial concerns, as well as at universities and technical and training colleges, when circumstances permit. These arrangements are now primarily intended for members of the armed forces, auxiliary services and civil defence units, but a certain number of places will be available for suitable persons whose education or training was prevented or interrupted by employment in work of national importance.<sup>4</sup>

During the war there were no great changes in the opportunities offered to women for higher education. It is interesting, however, to note, in view of its bearing on the future of women in the engineering profession, that an important electrical college (Faraday House Electrical Engineering College) which is affiliated to over 100 prominent electrical and mechanical engineering firms, decided in 1943 to open its doors to women, who may train for electrical engineering as men do. Although women have been able to receive an engineering education at university colleges and at training

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<sup>1</sup> *British Women at War*, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Information communicated by the Ministry of Labour and National Service.

<sup>3</sup> *British Women at War*, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

<sup>4</sup> MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND NATIONAL SERVICE: *Further Education and Training Scheme*, 25 Mar. 1943 (P.L. 120/1943, Apr. 1943).

colleges on the same terms as men, this was the only college which remained closed to women. The fact that this college is now open to women is especially important, because it provides for two years of workshop practice alternating with two years of university courses.<sup>1</sup>

As regards women in the medical profession, a number of medical schools were not open to women and some hospital appointments were barred to women. In view of the extension of the health services which is planned for the post-war period, recruitment of medical staff will have to be increased; therefore an interdepartmental committee, appointed in March 1942 by the Minister of Health and the Secretary of State for Scotland to examine the organisation of medical schools, particularly as regards medical teaching and research, put forward the following recommendations regarding women:

- (1) All medical schools should be open to women students;
- (2) Exchequer grants for medical education at schools should be conditional upon the school being coeducational and admitting a "reasonable" number of women students, the minimum percentage being one fifth of the students;
- (3) Sex barriers should be removed from all hospital appointments; and
- (4) Grants to medical students should be determined in such a way as to open the medical profession to all students with the necessary aptitude and ability, irrespective of their sex.<sup>2</sup>

Late in 1945, the Minister of Health explained the policy of the Government in this respect. It has made it a condition of future grants to medical schools that a "reasonable" proportion of women students should be accepted. Medical schools which have not previously admitted women are making plans to do so as soon as the difficulty of providing the necessary additional accommodation can be overcome.<sup>3</sup>

#### GOVERNMENT POLICY REGARDING WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT DURING THE RECONVERSION PERIOD

As soon as the war was over, the Government began a systematic and gradual relaxation of labour controls planned in order to restore

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<sup>1</sup> *Woman Engineer* (Journal of the Women's Engineering Society), Summer 1943, p. 240.

<sup>2</sup> MINISTRY OF HEALTH, Department of Health for Scotland: *Report of Interdepartmental Committee on Medical Schools* (H.M. Stationery Office, London, May 1944), pp. 97-100 and 102.

<sup>3</sup> *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, 22 Nov. 1945, col. 586.

as soon as possible individual freedom and at the same time to ensure during the difficult period of readjustment the fulfilment of urgent national needs, in particular by preserving the existing labour force in the essential industries.

As regards women workers, the first steps were taken in May 1945; women over 60 years of age were allowed, except in exceptional cases, to quit their jobs, and retire from industry.<sup>1</sup> Calling up for interview under the Registration for Employment Order was discontinued for women over 40 years of age.<sup>2</sup> At the same time, the Minister of Labour, then Mr. E. Bevin, in accordance with the general lines of plans prepared beforehand for the reallocation of manpower between civilian employment during any period between the defeat of Germany and the defeat of Japan<sup>3</sup>, announced that women over 50 years of age would be given, on application, permission to leave their job and retire unless there were strong production reasons to the contrary; that women under 21 years would no longer be required to leave home; that women with household responsibilities, whether single or married, would not be required to take employment and, if in employment, would be allowed to leave; and that men and women who had worked away from home for three years or more would be allowed to transfer to work nearer their homes, unless there were strong production reasons to the contrary.<sup>4</sup>

Further important steps were taken in this direction in December 1945, when the majority of women were excluded for the provisions of labour control. The new measures were announced in the House of Commons, by the Minister of Labour and National Service (Mr. Isaacs), on 13 December 1945.<sup>5</sup> On the one hand, it was decided to retain in general the Essential Work Orders, both for men and women; the various industries covered by the Orders were to be reviewed in the light of the changes in the situation, in order to maintain within the scope of the Orders only those industries where it was necessary from the point of view of production and manpower to continue this control.

On the other hand, the system of registering women under the Registration for Employment Orders as they reached the age of 18 years was discontinued as from 20 December 1945. Directions of

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<sup>1</sup> Essential Work (Permission to Terminate Employment) (Exemption) Order, 1945, S.R. and O. 1945, No. 560.

<sup>2</sup> *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, 17 May 1945, col. 2604.

<sup>3</sup> *Reallocation of Man Power between Civilian Employments during any Interim Period between the Defeat of Germany and the Defeat of Japan* (Cmd. 6568, H.M. Stationery Office, London, 1944).

<sup>4</sup> *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, 16 May 1945, cols. 2540-2541.

<sup>5</sup> *Idem*, 13 Dec. 1945, cols. 614-618.

labour were not to be given to women of any age, with the exception of nurses and midwives and in exceptional cases, for the purpose of making effective the Essential Work and similar Orders. Women of all ages were removed from the scope of the Control of Engagement Orders, which require that labour be engaged through a local office of the Ministry of Labour or other approved agency.<sup>1</sup> In addition, all age restrictions were removed in the cases of women entering on university courses in the autumn of 1945. It was suggested, however, that in selecting students for admission, educational establishments would wish to give preference, within the limits of academic suitability, to those who had performed national service.<sup>2</sup>

In view of the extreme shortage of nurses and midwives, various methods designed to meet the situation have been agreed between representative organisations in the hospital services and the Government. Since it will take some time to give effect to the agreed measures and to make the necessary adjustments, the Government has decided to retain for use as necessary during a period of six months, beginning from December 1945, the power of direction and control of engagement of nurses and midwives, with the object of ensuring as far as possible their distribution among the various health services according to need. The controls will apply to nurses and midwives, as well as to other persons who have had more than one year's recent nursing experience, and cover women up to and including the age of 40 years.<sup>3</sup>

Thus controls on women's employment have been greatly reduced for an important majority of women. But at the same time, the labour situation is such that, for reasons which are briefly enumerated here, there are urgent demands for labour. On the one hand, British export trade must be restored and as far as possible expanded; part of the national production capacity has to be turned over to the production of civilian goods; finally, industry is in serious need of re-equipment. On the other hand, certain circumstances contribute to reduce the labour force. One age group will be affected by the raising of the school-leaving age (to be effected in 1947) and possibly two age groups, if the school-leaving age is raised to 16 years; the continuation of some form of national service or military training will take another age group. There is also, owing to the strain of the war years, a substantial wastage of manpower from industry over the intake, estimated at no less than 400,000 per year. Of the 1,000,000 men over 65

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, July 1945, p. 114.

<sup>3</sup> *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, 13 Dec. 1945, cols. 614-618.

and women over 60, who were in industry, the war has taken its toll and many who are now free to retire are doing so. The decline in the birthrate between 1922 and 1930 has reduced the number of juveniles available to go into industry. In addition, it is expected that married women and women with household responsibilities will leave industry in substantial numbers.<sup>1</sup> All these conditions greatly affect the labour market, and in spite of the release of men and women from the armed forces and auxiliary services and the redistribution of the labour force, there are urgent demands for labour. While the labour controls were being lifted for the majority of women, urgent appeals were made to them to remain in or to enter employment. On 13 December 1945, the Minister of Labour and National Service, Mr. Isaacs said in the House of Commons:

For a long time to come there will be an acute labour shortage and we shall need the services of every man and woman who can stay at work. I appeal particularly to the women not to withdraw or withhold their services. They have done a splendid job during the war and we need their help just as much now.<sup>2</sup>

The immediate effect of the termination of the war on the volume of the female labour force was a substantial reduction in the number of women employed in the metal and chemical industries, where there were 237,000 women less at the end of September 1945 than at the beginning of June 1945 (the female labour force decreased in these industries from 1,455,000 to 1,218,000). There was also a slight decrease in agriculture, national Government service and transportation. On the other hand, women's employment rose to a small extent in such fields as local Government service, food, drink and tobacco, textiles, clothing, boots and shoes and various manufacturing industries, and in the distributive trades. In all, however, there was, during those four months, a reduction of 222,000 in the number of women in industry. In addition there were 75,000 less women in the auxiliary services in September than in June. Thus about 300,000 women left the labour market during this period; unemployment among the registered insured women workers increased by 38,000 (from 35,000 to 73,000).<sup>3</sup>

Civilian industries and services are being expanded and the Government is making special efforts to assist them by promoting the transfer of those experienced ex-operatives from munitions work and by encouraging others (including men and women from the forces) who are looking for new jobs to consider these industries and services as possible openings for settlement in permanent

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<sup>1</sup> *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, 16 May 1945, cols. 2537-2538.

<sup>2</sup> *Idem*, 13 Dec. 1945, col. 618.

<sup>3</sup> *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, Nov. 1945, p. 194.



employment. While it is no longer obligatory upon the majority of men and women to take their employment through the local offices of the Ministry of Labour or approved agencies, encouragement is given to prospective workers to use them in seeking employment. Demands for women workers made to the employment exchanges are mainly for laundries (nearly 9,000 approved vacancies), domestic service (over 35,000 vacancies, excluding demands for private households), nursing (some 30,000 posts for trained nurses and student nurses), and also for the General Post Office (for the telephone and telegraph services), for road and rail transport (1,650 vacancies in the operating and permanent way grades) and for the printing and bookbinding industry.<sup>1</sup>

It is of importance to note that it was found desirable to continue during the reconversion period a special advisory committee to assist the Minister of Labour in dealing with questions relating to women's employment. In October 1945 the Minister of Labour and National Service dissolved the Women's Consultative Committee and reappointed it, with the mission "to advise [him] on questions relating to the resettlement of women in civilian life".<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Idem*, Sept. 1945, pp. 154-156.

<sup>2</sup> *Idem*, Nov. 1945, p. 193. The membership of the new committee is as follows: Miss Alice Bacon, Viscountess Davidson, Miss Dorothy Elliott, Mrs. Walter Elliott, Miss Florence Hancock, the Countess of Limerick, Lady Megan Lloyd George, Miss Marjorie Maxse and Miss Mary Sutherland. Miss Caroline Haslett, adviser to the Minister of Labour and National Service on women's training, is also associated with the committee.

## CHAPTER II

### WOMEN IN INDUSTRY

#### TRAINING FOR INDUSTRY

Long before the official policy in respect of labour supply in case of a war emergency was announced, voluntary organisations, as a result of the prevailing political tension, began to take steps to train women to enable them to replace men in various forms of national service. Voluntary organisations, which have always played an important part in Great Britain, were generally encouraged and, in some cases, actively supported by the authorities. Some of them had been formed in the last war and were revived, while others were newly organised. In 1939, voluntary organisations took the first measures to organise vocational training for women and girls.

At the outbreak of the war, women applied in great numbers to the Women's Engineering Society for training in munitions work. The training was initiated not long before the war, first in London in collaboration with the London Polytechnic, but classes had to be arranged in various cities such as Birmingham, Glasgow, etc. At the beginning of the war, special attention was given to the training of women who could take up positions as forewomen and would be able to help to train others. The classes consisted partly of class work and partly of work on machines and use of tools.<sup>1</sup> At an early stage of its operation, however, the supervision of the Society's training scheme was assumed by the Government. The Society for Promoting the Training of Women continued during the war to grant loans to girls wishing to take up professional training for such careers as elementary and secondary school teaching, medicine, nursing, house-property management, secretarial work, horticulture, domestic science, physical training and nursery-school teaching.<sup>2</sup> This scheme, however useful, concerned only a few occupations of a permanent character. On the other hand, the

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<sup>1</sup> *Manchester Guardian*, 7 Sept. 1939.

<sup>2</sup> *The Times*, 11 July 1942.

scheme established by the Women's Engineering Society was not in a position to supply enough women workers to meet the expanding demands of war industries.

Towards 1942 it was found necessary to give industrial training to large numbers of women in order to fit them for occupations where they were not customarily employed. This problem became all the more urgent because, on account of the labour shortage and the expansion of war production, the large-scale application of dilution of work, especially in the engineering industry, made it possible to use large numbers of women workers.

It is true that this policy did not concern women workers only, since both male and female unskilled workers had to be trained within a very short time for semi-skilled occupations. The training schemes set up or extended for the instruction of this "green" labour force were open to both men and women but, since they have been described in previous I.L.O. publications<sup>1</sup>, it is here necessary only to summarise them briefly and to record the problems that have arisen in the training of women and the arrangements which have been made specifically for them.

### *Government Training Schemes*

#### *Conditions of Training.*

Government training centres, technical colleges and engineering works training facilities are available for suitable persons of 16 years of age and over; persons already engaged in work of vital national importance are not accepted and persons in employment must not leave their jobs for training, unless they are officially advised to do so. Training is provided free and trainees over the age of 18 in the case of women (and over 19 in the case of men) are paid weekly wages, the rates being subject to two increments of 2 shillings a week (or 3 shillings in the case of men over 21) payable approximately at the end of the 8th and 12th week of training, when the training reaches specified standards of instruction and subject to the attainment of certain standards of proficiency. These rates have been revised from time to time; in May 1943 they were as follows, in addition to the lodging allowance or settling-in grants and, when necessary, free travelling warrants or financial assistance for travelling expenses (see table VIII, overleaf).

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<sup>1</sup> For an account of the organisation of training facilities in Great Britain, see I.L.O.: *Labour Supply and National Defence*, op. cit. pp. 80-88.

TABLE VIII. WAGES PAID UNDER GOVERNMENT TRAINING SCHEMES

Age groups	Minimum rate	First increment	Second increment	Maximum rate
<i>Women</i>				
21 and over.....	50s.	2s.	2s.	54s.
20 " ".....	47s. 6d.	2s.	2s.	51s. 6d.
19 " ".....	45s.	2s.	2s.	49s.
18 " ".....	42s. 6d.	2s.	2s.	46s. 6d.
<i>Men</i>				
21 and over.....	71s. 6d.	3s.	3s.	77s. 6d.
20 " ".....	48s.	2s.	2s.	52s.
19 " ".....	41s. 6d.	2s.	2s.	45s. 6d.

Trainees in receipt of these wages are regarded as under a contract of service in the same way as new entrants in the engineering industry. These rates of wages are subject to deductions made in respect of unemployment and national health insurance contributions and are assessable for income tax.

Young trainees (16 to 18 years of age), whose homes are within daily travelling distance from a training establishment, are paid allowances which are the same for girls and boys in the 16- and 17-age groups. These allowances amount respectively to 20 and 21 shillings a week as starting rates, and 24 and 25 shillings as final rates; they are supplemented by a free mid-day meal or 10d. per day in lieu, if canteen facilities are not available. Male trainees of 18 years who live at home during training receive weekly allowances of 27s. 6d. as starting rates, rising by increments to 31s. 6d. Male trainees of 16-19 receive a personal allowance varying from 9s. to 14s. 6d. per week and the cost of board and lodging when they live away from home. Women under 18 years of age are not accepted for training away from home.

Training hours vary from 37 to 44 hours a week according to the particular training establishment and according to whether shift work is in operation. Canteen facilities are available at larger training establishments. There are also provisions for certain payments on account of sickness or accidents arising during training.<sup>1</sup>

### *Basic Training.*

Training facilities are organised in Government training centres, which were established after World War I, and, during the

<sup>1</sup> MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND NATIONAL SERVICE: *Interesting War Work in the Engineering Industry* (P.L. 115/1943 (revised), May 1943); *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, May 1943, p. 64.

depression, were intended to solve the unemployment problem. With the introduction of great numbers of new workers into industry, Government training centres proved, after a few months of war, insufficient to train all the workers needed for the mechanised army and for the war industry expanding at an accelerated rate. Technical colleges, technical institutes and polytechnics were therefore used to give the new war training. But their possibilities were also found inadequate, and subsequently, arrangements were also made with firms for giving training courses when their machines and fitting benches were not fully engaged in war work. The instruction is standardised in all centres according to syllabuses prepared by the Ministry of Labour and National Service.<sup>1</sup> Two special schemes are therefore in operation: (a) an emergency training scheme which provides for training in technical colleges where, in general, new workers get instruction in the simpler operations; before the Government training centres opened their doors to women early in 1941, some technical colleges had special classes for women workers and generally established new classes as the need arose<sup>2</sup>; (b) an auxiliary training scheme which provides systematic instruction in employers' workshops; *i.e.*, employers, in addition to undertaking the maximum amount of training required for their own needs, are requested to train persons in excess of such needs, and arrangements are made in this respect with the Government; under this scheme a trainee is not placed with the employer who provides the training.<sup>3</sup>

Government training centres are still one of the main features of the Government-sponsored training scheme. They expanded greatly during the war and, after concentration, totalled 16 in the spring of 1943.<sup>4</sup> Courses provided for unskilled labour under all these schemes normally last from 8 to 16 weeks and give training in the use of tools; the actual curriculum is flexible in order to adapt the training as closely as possible to local needs. They also provide instruction in safety precautions.<sup>5</sup> Courses have been organised in the Government training centres, which include sheet-metal work and panel beating; oxy-acetylene welding; electric welding; capstan operating; centre lathe turning; milling; grinding; fitting; aero-detail fitting; instrument making; draughtsmanship,

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<sup>1</sup> *Woman Engineer*, June 1941, p. 99.

<sup>2</sup> MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND NATIONAL SERVICE: *Training for War-Time Work in the Engineering Industry, Courses in Training Colleges* (P.L. 79/1940).

<sup>3</sup> MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND NATIONAL SERVICE: *Training for War-Time Work in the Engineering Industry, Auxiliary Training in Employers' Workshops* (Feb. 1941, P.L. 82/1941).

<sup>4</sup> *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, Feb. 1942, p. 33; *Economist*, 29 May 1943, p. 682.

<sup>5</sup> *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, Feb. 1942, p. 33.

electrical installation; inspection and viewing; motor mechanics.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to the elementary training for industrial work given under the schemes described above, special courses have been set up by the Ministry of Labour and National Service for the instruction of certain classes of workers particularly in demand on account of war conditions.

In July 1941, the Ministry of Labour initiated a scheme for training drivers of light commercial lorries up to 3 tons unladen weight; the scheme was designed mostly for women, in order to fill the gaps caused by the calling up of existing male drivers and to release male drivers for heavy lorry work. Training is given in motor-driving schools or by road-haulage operators to whom appropriate fees are paid. Persons over 17 who satisfy the physical standards for holding a driving licence and who are not reserved for military service are eligible. Trainees are paid during their instruction; on its conclusion they take the driving test imposed on behalf of the Ministry of War Transport.<sup>2</sup>

The Ministry of Labour and National Service, in co-operation with the Ministry of Education, arranged for men and women to be trained free of charge as cooks for large-scale cooking in hospitals, munitions hostels, school-meal centres, canteens, and so forth. These courses are held in selected technical institutes and last 12 weeks in the case of women with no experience of cookery, and 6 weeks for women who have had some experience of canteen cooking.<sup>3</sup> Conditions of training are the same as those described above.

Courses have also been established for the training of women for domestic work in hospitals and similar institutions. These courses last 4 weeks and are intended for the instruction of kitchen maids, ward maids, housemaids and dining-room maids.<sup>4</sup>

### *Higher-Grade Training.*

When the supply of skilled labour was nearly exhausted it became necessary to upgrade experienced workers to take on work to the limit of their capabilities, and arrangements for their intensive training were made. More specialised training was provided under the Government training schemes, the period of which did not normally exceed 16 weeks. In order to equip women workers for more skilled work, they were frequently sent to Government training centres for further instruction. When the women returned

<sup>1</sup> MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND NATIONAL SERVICE: *Interesting War Work in the Engineering Industry*, op. cit.

<sup>2</sup> Ministry of Labour and National Service, Press Office release of 23 July 1941.

<sup>3</sup> *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, Nov. 1943, p. 151.

<sup>4</sup> MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND NATIONAL SERVICE: *Training for Domestic Work in Hospitals and Similar Institutions* (May 1944, P.L. 153/1944).

to work and had had time to settle down again to production the firm was visited in order to ascertain whether the training had achieved the desired result.

In addition, special short courses were arranged in various Government centres in order to meet some of the needs of local firms.<sup>1</sup>

Arrangements were also made for women who were included on the Women's Technical Service Register to have a special course at Government training centres to give them a general background of engineering workshop practice in order to qualify them for technical appointments.

In view of the expected increased demand for women in drawing offices, special appeals were made to women to take the draughtsmanship course, which was of 16 weeks duration, after which trainees might qualify as detail draughtsmen. Courses on this subject, based on a more comprehensive curriculum, might be extended to a maximum of 39 weeks in suitable cases. Trainees who did not show the required rate of progress were placed as tracers or in other suitable occupations after the first test.<sup>2</sup>

Besides these training facilities for industrial workers, the Ministry of Labour and National Service, in collaboration with the Board of Education and the Scottish Education Department, initiated, in August 1941, special part-time higher-grade courses such as the courses of lectures on foremanship organised in a great number of industrial areas. These classes were open to suitably qualified women (existing forewomen and women having suitable experience) on the same terms as to men. The subjects covered were: general principles of foremanship and supervision; the principle of production and planning, the elements of labour management; costing and remuneration. The standard foremanship course was of 84 hours' duration and was given in sessions of 2 hours each, held once or twice a week outside working hours.<sup>3</sup> A shortened foremanship course of 28 hours' duration was also provided. Subsequently, other courses of lectures were organised by the same authorities at technical colleges on the work of women supervisors in particular. These courses were normally of 30 hours' duration and the classes were held outside working hours at meetings each lasting 2 hours. The subjects covered were general principles of workshop supervision, and factory legislation (including special wartime measures). Only existing women supervisors and other

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<sup>1</sup> MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND NATIONAL SERVICE: *Interesting War Work in the Engineering Industry*, *op. cit.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, Apr. 1942, p. 84.

<sup>3</sup> *Idem*, Aug. 1941, p. 158.

women who had not had less than 6 months' experience in industry were accepted. These courses met the increasing need of providing the necessary higher-grade staff of women personnel officers.<sup>1</sup>

### *Training within Industry*

Although the Government training schemes proved of invaluable importance in the training of women for industrial work, a great part of the training was provided by the factories themselves. Mention has already been made of the co-operation existing between private firms and the Government as regards the basic instruction of workers and also the measures that the Government took in the organising of special courses to suit the needs of private firms. It was sometimes found more convenient to give short intensive training to "green" labour for very limited operations in the factories in which they were to be employed. It was clear also that instruction had to be given for many special processes and this could be done, in most cases, only in the factories. The importance of training within industry was considerable, especially with the policy of upgrading workers to the limit of their capacities.

Here are some typical instances of training schemes organised by private firms.

One Midlands firm ran an aircraft training school, where the women were passed to the instructor and learnt how to handle and use instruments, tools and machines. Individual and class instruction was given and special note was taken of any particular aptitude, which was fully utilised when the woman was placed on production work. The training period usually lasted about a fortnight; women who passed successfully through a special training course in 10 days, and worked satisfactorily during one week's trial on the production line, received a special certificate.<sup>2</sup>

A well-known manufactory of flying boats had its own specialised school, and a precise training policy was operated. The applicant, before starting any training, was given various special tests (verbal and non-verbal), and was interviewed by the training supervisor, as steps for a correct estimate of the potential mental and temperamental characteristics of the candidate. Girls might thus be directed to either of the divisions of the school: (1) the manual division: (a) preliminary general bench training (handling of tools required for high-class filing, backsawing, drilling and simple map and countersunk hand riveting)—in addition, short lectures were given covering decimals, rule reading, essentials of drawing, marking

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<sup>1</sup> *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, Aug. 1941, p. 158.

<sup>2</sup> *Engineering Bulletin*, No. 14, July 1942, pp. 158-162.



out plane parts; (b) the girl was placed on the specific and specialised work according to the results of her original test; close collaboration existed between the school and the workshops so that the training policy could be sensibly planned to meet the needs of the production, and girls were trained in wing-spar assembly, wing assembly, detail fitting, sub-assembly work, wing, engine, nacelle and instrument-panel wiring, viewing and joinery; (2) the stores training section, where girls got familiar with every aspect of the store system operated in the factory organisation and were given additional lectures on the principles of store keeping. On the conclusion of the course, a manual was given to each trainee.<sup>1</sup>

A comprehensive scheme for preliminary training was arranged by a large engineering firm in the eastern region. Training was given separately to all new female entrants; a man, with experience in foremanship and time and motion study, was appointed as full-time organiser. Instruction was divided into 4 periods: (1) lectures, some of general interest regarding, for instance, the history and development of the firm; (2) instruction in the use of micrometers and an introduction to machinery, grinding, assembly and inspection principles; (3) explanation by male and female instructors on the functions of equipment, demonstration of the various operations, and naming of the working parts of the machines on which the trainees were to work; (4) trainees began to do operations for themselves. At each step, the progress made by the trainee was recorded, and predetermined standards had to be attained by all trainees before they proceeded to the production shop. The important feature of the training school was the development of operational speed and manual dexterity among the trainees. The normal period of training varied from 3 days to 6 weeks, according to the work that the new entrants were to be engaged in; 70 to 80 trainees could be accommodated in the school and from the inception of the programme until June 1944, some 1,400 women had passed from the classes on to production.<sup>2</sup>

Training within industry also proved successful as regards instruction for higher-grade skilled occupations. Here are some examples: one firm trained in aero-engine conversion to marine use the women who had already taken the firm's metal work course and had at least one year's production experience in the factory. In another firm, women chosen among capstan operators were trained within 8 to 10 days by a setter of the section to do highly skilled tank-engine machining.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Idem*, No. 10, Mar. 1942, pp. 66-69.

<sup>2</sup> *Production and Engineering Bulletin*, June 1944, p. 273.

<sup>3</sup> *Engineering Bulletin*, No. 14, July 1942, pp. 158-162.

*Training of Disabled Persons*

Efforts were made throughout the war to rehabilitate disabled persons and to use their services for war production and special arrangements were made for them. An interim scheme of training for disabled persons has been in operation since late in 1941. It was designed for the benefit of women and girls over the age of 16 as well as of men and boys, and covered all disabled British subjects, whatever the cause of disablement, and foreigners who have suffered disablement since the beginning of the war. Co-operation was established between hospitals and local offices of the Ministry of Labour and National Service, so that disabled persons were interviewed by an officer of these "connected" offices and the record of the interview was used to advise the patient as soon as he or she returned home. Training was given at Government training centres, in occupations connected with munitions work, in courses similar to those given to all trainees, if the disabled persons were judged fit to undertake them successfully, or in special courses modified to suit disabled persons and adapted to particular types of disablement; courses of training were also available at residential training establishments, which had special experience in this kind of training, at technical colleges and similar establishments, and at employers' works. Under this scheme, persons in training receive weekly maintenance allowances, which have been revised from time to time. The rates are now as follows:

TABLE IX. WEEKLY MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCES OF DISABLED PERSONS

(a) <i>Persons Living at Home</i>			
Age	Men and boys	Women and girls	
—	—	—	
21 and over	45s.	38s.	Plus (1) 10s. per week for a wife (or in certain circumstances other adult dependant), and 4s. per week for each child under 16; and (2) a mid-day meal or, if no facilities for a meal exist at the training establishment, 5s. per week in lieu.
20	37s.	35s.	
19	34s. 6d.	32s.	
18	27s. 6d.	25s.	
17	21s.	19s.	
16	20s.	18s.	
(b) <i>Persons Living in Lodgings or at Residential Centres</i>			
Age	Men and boys	Women and girls	
—	—	—	
21 and over	24s.	17s.	Plus (1) 10s. per week for a wife (or in certain circumstances other adult dependant), and 4s. per week for each child under 16; and (2) cost of lodgings not exceeding 30s. per week and a mid-day meal or, if no facilities for a meal exist at the training establishment, 5s. per week in lieu, or in the case of residential centres, full board and lodgings including a mid-day meal.
20	16s.	14s.	
19	13s. 6d.	11s.	
18	10s. 6d.	10s.	
17	9s.	8s.	
16	9s.	8s.	

In addition to the above allowances the following are also payable:

- (1) Daily travelling expenses where necessary;
- (2) If training is given away from the home area, a trainee who continues to maintain his former home receives an additional allowance of 23s. per week.

The arrangements made under the interim scheme were given permanence by the passing of the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, 1944<sup>1</sup>, which was intended to make further and better provision for enabling persons handicapped by disablement to secure employment or work on their own account, the main change being the preference given to men who have served whole time in the armed forces of the Crown or in the merchant navy or the mercantile marine and women who have served whole time in any of the capacities mentioned in the First Schedule to the Act.<sup>2</sup>

#### *Post-War Plans*

As part of the resettlement scheme and as a means of furthering the supply of skilled workers in industry to meet abnormal deficiencies in the post-war period, industrial training was introduced to assist men and women released from war service who are in need of a course of training to enable them to obtain employment of a kind likely to lead to permanent resettlement, having regard to their capacity and the estimated probable needs of industry.

The scheme applies not only to those who have served in the armed forces of the Crown and their auxiliary services, but also to persons whose war service has been on other types of work of national importance, including industrial work.

For those within the scope of the scheme the broad conditions of eligibility are:

- (1) That a period of full-time service in work of national importance has been served during the war.
- (2) That by reason of such service the person concerned has either—
  - (a) been unable to start or complete training for a skilled occupation, or
  - (b) suffered interruption in the following of his occupation.
- (3) That he is in need of a course of training to enable him to obtain employment of a satisfactory kind having regard to his general capacity.

The training will generally be given in Government training centres and technical colleges. Adequate allowances, including supplementary allowances for dependants, will be paid during

<sup>1</sup> Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, 1944, assented to 1 March 1944, Geo. 6, Ch. 10.

<sup>2</sup> For fuller information on this subject, cf. I.L.O.: *The Training and Employment of Disabled Persons: A Preliminary Report*, Studies and Reports, Series E, No. 7 (Montreal, 1945).

training and will be the same, irrespective of the trade for which the individual is being trained. Arrangements will also be made, where appropriate, for training in employers' establishments under suitable financial arrangements.

The detailed application of the training scheme is being worked out in full consultation with the representative organisations of employers and workpeople concerned in the various industries.<sup>1</sup> The Government published proposals concerning training in the building<sup>2</sup> and civil engineering industries after the war, but women have not been included in these schemes.<sup>3</sup>

Post-war plans have also been put forward by the Government as regards apprenticeships interrupted by war service.<sup>4</sup> The arrangements to be made will apply equally to men and women. Schemes for each of the industries in which apprentices are employed are being prepared in consultation between representatives of the relevant employers' organisations and trade unions, and the Ministry of Labour and National Service. All schemes are based on general principles laid down by the Government, and will provide for:

(1) A reduction of the unexpired period of apprenticeship by not less than one third; a man who was in the last year of his apprenticeship is to be regarded as a journeyman on return to civil employment;

(2) A wage of not less than ten twelfths of the journeyman's rate for the trade during the first half of the shortened period of renewed apprenticeship, and not less than eleven twelfths during the second half. There will be a Government grant of one third of the journeyman's rate in respect of each apprentice to enable the employer to pay these rates. A man who returns to his trade before his original apprenticeship would have ended will receive, to begin with, the rate that he would have been getting if his apprenticeship had not been interrupted;

(3) A period of technical training in suitable cases, with maintenance (including dependants' allowance) and free training;

(4) The apprentice will return in general to his former employer; he may, however, return to a different employer if the former employer is not now in business;

(5) Service by a man at his trade while in the forces is taken into account in arranging the period of renewed apprenticeship.

The scheme applies to men and women whose apprenticeship has been interrupted by war service. It is not confined to those who have served in the armed forces; other forms of war service, including civil defence, etc., and industrial employment, are recognised for this purpose.

<sup>1</sup> *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, 6 Apr. 1944, cols. 2146-2147.

<sup>2</sup> *Training for the Building Industry* (Cmd. 6428, H.M. Stationery Office, London, Feb. 1943), presented to Parliament by the Ministry of Works.

<sup>3</sup> *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, 6 Apr. 1944, cols. 2146-2147.

<sup>4</sup> *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, Oct. 1944, pp. 165-166.

It is not expected that many women will qualify for acceptance under the scheme, as, in general, they will have completed their period of training in women's occupations before taking up war service.

#### TYPE OF WORK PERFORMED, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE SHIPBUILDING AND ENGINEERING INDUSTRIES

As already stated<sup>1</sup>, women's employment increased remarkably during the war. The employment of women in large numbers in industry was considerably facilitated by developments brought about during the last two decades, such as simplification of industrial processes, increasing use of mechanical devices and establishment of new branches of industry (such as radio manufacture). The breaking down of processes into their component parts, in particular, allowed an increased use of "green" labour or only slightly trained workers. The large-scale use of labour-saving devices made it possible to put women on jobs which were considered too heavy for them.

#### *Labour-Saving Devices*

A few of the general methods used for saving or easing labour are given below. It will be seen that, as stated in the memorandum<sup>2</sup> from the Ministry of Labour, "there have, in fact, been no startling innovations during the war but this is because labour-saving devices are freely used in peacetime. There are now of course many more schemes in use although the methods are not new because women are being introduced so largely into processes hitherto done by men."

(1) Where heavy materials are handled from bench to floor and eventually to a truck for transport, the platform of the truck is detached from the truck chassis, and provided with four legs or supports, there are some six to twelve platforms for every chassis and a fixed or removable sloping bench, one end of which is level with the bench proper and the other end is level with the platform. In this way, the heavy gear can be slid along the bench, down the sloping bench and along the platform where it is left until the platform is full. The truck chassis can then be pushed under the platform which it raises and then transported as required. In some cases half round metal strips are fixed along the sloping bench and platform as this reduces the surface friction and hence the effort to slide the loads along them. This method is valuable in reducing the muscular fatigue which would be necessary in the frequent lifting of the loads from bench to floor and truck, etc. With suitable materials, roller or gravity conveyors could be substituted for the benches.

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<sup>1</sup> See p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Information communicated by the Ministry of Labour and National Service.

(2) The provision of suitable means for holding materials plays an important part in reducing fatigue in much the same way that a handle on an attaché or suitcase reduces the fatigue of carrying them without the handle. There are many such ideas now in use—for instance, the provision of a rope basket with two or four handles enables heavy shells and the like to be moved with less muscular effort and a corresponding increase in speed and output.

(3) A method in use for handling small machined parts when packed into containers is to provide suitable gear operated by foot treadle which lifts the container to a level where the hands can grip the handles without having to do any further lifting by the body. The strain on the back muscles is very much reduced by such a device.

(4) Certain jobs of an assembly nature are speeded forward if the work is done on a high bench some 3 ft. 3 in. in height which enables the operative to stand or sit with his back straight and upright. Such a scheme would be unsuitable where some vertical pressure has to be exerted on the work.

(5) In many cases arm rests are provided for assembly processes as this very much reduces the fatigue of holding materials in the hand.

(6) The initial handling of some heavy materials is aided by the provision of an irregular surface on which they rest. This allows the fingers to be placed under the load without the risk of straining the fingers or breaking the nails. The provision of grooves about 1 in. deep and 1 to 1½ in. wide on the benches and truck platforms is a simple method of accomplishing this.

(7) The use of hydraulic power is proving very useful in factories where women are handling heavy articles. For instance large shells can be hoisted from truck into machine by small permanent hydraulic cranes arranged at the machines, and in addition the hydraulic power may be used to operate the trucks and provide the necessary pressure for holding the tools against the revolving metal.

### *Dilution of Work*

Efforts have been made to simplify industrial machinery, especially in industries handicapped by a shortage of skilled labour. Many illustrations of these technical improvements may be found in the *Production and Engineering Bulletin*, issued jointly by the Ministry of Labour and National Service and the Ministry of Production. As an illustration of this trend, mention may be made of a report<sup>1</sup> prepared by the Institution of Production Engineers regarding simplification of machine setting, showing in particular how machine setting can be broken down into its various categories in order that upgraded labour may be utilised to the full and skilled setters applied only to the highly skilled complex work. This report contains the following remarks concerning women setters: "Women having the right characteristics can be trained as efficient machine setters, and, undoubtedly, the best policy is to introduce female setters on the simplest functions first, further upgrading the supplanted men on to higher grade setting; this method obtains the maximum co-operation from all classes".

<sup>1</sup> *Production and Engineering Bulletin*, Nov. 1943, pp. 553-559 (Part. 1); Dec. 1944, pp. 587-593 (Part 2).

While at first firms were rather sceptical of engaging women, necessity compelled them to have recourse to new sources of labour. Dilution of work and systematisation of processes proved one of the efficient ways to make the best of women with no experience of factory work and later, when women flocked into industry, to employ housewives as part-time or full-time workers.

Some examples of vigorous dilution of work and extensive use of female labour in various industries are given below. One firm, confronted with a bottleneck, began in 1942 to produce its own gauges in a department almost entirely staffed by women trained on the job. There were only three men working in a supervisory capacity (works manager, shop manager and day foreman). Production reached several hundreds of gauges a week. This was achieved by breaking down the work into a line production job, each worker being capable of fulfilling at least one operation, while some workers could carry out one or more. The women worked from drawings and did the setting of their own machines. The grinders also dressed the wheels. This achievement, by no means the only one of the sort, is all the more remarkable that all this work was formerly done by skilled men.<sup>1</sup>

In one firm engaged in a wide variety of electric-cable making, female dilution of 35 per cent. was achieved; many of the women were part-timers.<sup>2</sup>

In a firm engaged on a varied programme of fairly heavy engineering (including gun carriages, armoured fighting vehicles, frigate rudders, etc.), employment was normally confined to skilled men and apprentices. Dilution by women was agreed upon by the workers' and the management representatives, in September 1940. In 1941, the labour force was augmented by semi-skilled male operators, and later in the year suitable women workers became available. Practically all the semi-skilled workers were trained in the factory. It may be added that a large majority of the production required a degree of skill which would have been expected only from skilled men before the war. The main causes given for the success of these measures were:

(1) The assistance and advice generously given by the officials of the Manpower Board and the local employment exchange;

(2) The co-operation of the works supervisors and the assistance and guidance given to the unskilled and semi-skilled intakes by the skilled men;

(3) The patience and understanding of the woman labour supervisor.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Production and Engineering Bulletin*, June 1944, p. 270.

<sup>2</sup> *Idem*, Aug. 1943.

<sup>3</sup> *Idem*, May 1944.

In the aircraft industry, a large firm formerly used almost exclusively male labour for skilled machine operations. In 1942, the firm had achieved more than 50 per cent. dilution by women.<sup>1</sup>

The extent to which the replanning of work facilitates the employment of women may be shown by the following particulars. Two firms making large seaplane parts had in November 1942, 53 per cent. and 43 per cent. women workers respectively; another firm building Spitfires, 37 per cent., while several subcontractors and dispersal units manufacturing special parts had from 60 to 80 per cent. women. In individual shops and departments of large firms, making complete aircraft, an even greater percentage of dilution was achieved: 100 per cent. dilution was reached in welding, detail fitting and sub-assembly work.<sup>2</sup> In marine engineering shops, the following percentages of dilution with women were reached in November 1942: gear-fitting shop, 21 per cent.; blade and rolling mills, 37 per cent.; light machine shop, 14 per cent. In one firm, 54 per cent. dilution was achieved in the building and assembling of low-pressure valves in November 1942. In another one, it was claimed that, except for foremen, the building of oil coolers was all done by women.<sup>3</sup>

### *Women on Skilled Work*

While it is clear that women are put to a great extent on unskilled or semi-skilled jobs, owing to their lack of adequate training for higher grades of work, it has been necessary to upgrade suitable women to skilled work. This has been possible by intensive training given mostly by the factories themselves, but also at Government training centres. Women have proved themselves capable of doing especially well precision work requiring a high degree of accuracy, and examples are also given of women doing jobs which require initiative and involve a relatively high degree of responsibility. For instance, after a short period of training, a 21-year-old girl was put to operate a roll grinder used for large and valuable steel rolls; in a few weeks she gave complete satisfaction in handling the machine. Without supervision she was grinding rolls of all dimensions up to the maximum size that the machine could accommodate (up to 40 in. diameter, by 10 ft. long and weighing up to 12 tons). Later this young girl was asked to take over a bigger roll-grinding machine (for rolls for light alloys), but before doing so, she had to train another woman to operate the older machine.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Production and Engineering Bulletin*, July 1942, pp. 158-162.

<sup>2</sup> *Idem*, Nov. 1942, p. 56.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 60.

<sup>4</sup> *Idem*, Nov. 1944, p. 491.



Another woman, a housewife, was engaged on building concrete mixers. She had no previous engineering experience when she joined the firm. After 14 days spent in the inspection department, she was transferred to the fitting and erecting shop. Her training was acquired entirely by working on production. Her building time compared favourably with those of her predecessors, and was only 15 per cent. longer than that of the skilled fitter who had 5 years' experience of this type of mixer ("closed drum" concrete mixer of 10 cub. ft. capacity).<sup>1</sup>

In a large aircraft firm, engaged in the manufacture of wooden structures, women made up almost all the staff. Women and girls who, when they were drafted, had no previous knowledge of the correct use of wood-working tools, were given a short period of training and they were capable of producing many of the large sub-assemblies from start to finish. The work also involved the fitting of the aircrafts' skins, metal fittings and Perspex panels; and inspection of structures after they have been assembled. While this work was previously always done by men, experience has proved that women need no more supervision than men, and that, despite the skilled nature of the work, women's output is quite equal to that of the men they have replaced.<sup>2</sup>

Notable developments have occurred in the employment of women as skilled workers in the machine-tool industry. Many examples may be given of women replacing men on their jobs, checking their work with gauges or micrometers and also changing about on the different machines; this work requires high precision, and operations are very varied.<sup>3</sup> Women were engaged on work in a highly specialised section of a firm building resistance welding machines. They were first used on making the smaller sub-assembling (such as transformer-tapping, switchboards, terminal panels, etc.), where they had to utilise drilling jigs and various fixtures to aid machining. Women proved so satisfactory that they were given more and more exacting work, such as assembly of valves, pressure switches, and similar units where a high degree of fitting skill is essential; they tackled all the various assembling of transformers from small control transformers to those of the larger types. Finally, women were admitted to work in the instrument room where control panels, timers, etc. are made.<sup>4</sup>

Seven hundred and fifty women were, in one works, put on jobs which were considered suitable only for "time served" men really skilled in optical instrument work, the various branches of

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 502.

<sup>2</sup> *Idem*, June 1944, p. 274.

<sup>3</sup> *Idem*, Sept. 1942, pp. 201-202.

<sup>4</sup> *Idem*, Apr. 1943, p. 254.

which, including laboratory work, optical inspection, cleansing lenses and prisms, and silvering required patience and skill.<sup>1</sup>

### *Women Performing Heavy Work*

Women's employment extended during the war to many occupations which had been considered too heavy for them. Such utilisation of female labour was to a very large extent facilitated by the introduction of labour-saving devices. In foundries, for instance, women have been employed as core makers since 1912, but this class of work was given considerable wartime extension as a job that can be done by women. Specially selected women labourers did the heavier jobs, such as feeding and unloading sand-mixing mills, transporting sand in wheelbarrows, etc.<sup>2</sup> Women were also employed on such heavy engineering work as shell-forging.<sup>3</sup>

In the heavy chemical industry where sometimes much outdoor work is involved, women were found shovelling coal, loading railway trucks, and operating cement mixers (mixing and wheeling away cement). In shops and sheds, they operated heavy presses and other sheet-metal working equipment for the manufacture of steel drums, charged process pans with acid, handled chemicals, and filled trucks with these products, etc.<sup>4</sup>

Women might also be seen reconditioning heavy vehicles for the services and for passenger and road transport; in one very large depot all the work was done by men and women who, with the exception of upgraded men and men from the Government training centres, were without any engineering experience before entering the depot. The work included the reconditioning and repairing of chassis and engines for a wide variety of heavy vehicles. On the actual repair work, women replaced men on a large number of jobs. To make this possible, several "aids" were introduced (including handling equipment, longer spanners and longer tommy bars) to compensate for a woman's restricted physical strength. As far as possible, the strongest and more robust women were picked for the heavier work. In another establishment which supplemented the Army's own repair facilities and where fighting vehicles used on active service were reconditioned, women made up 72.8 per cent.

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<sup>1</sup> *Production and Engineering Bulletin*, May 1944, p. 204.

<sup>2</sup> *Idem*, Oct. 1943, p. 519; Aug. 1943, pp. 418-419.

<sup>3</sup> *Idem*, May 1944, p. 204.

<sup>4</sup> *Idem*, Oct. 1944, p. 477.

of the staff.<sup>1</sup> Girls were also engaged on turning rolls for use in steel mills, a heavy job that requires also considerable accuracy, and was in the past done generally by skilled turners.<sup>2</sup> Women were found to a great extent on tank production, doing work which is both skilled and of a heavy nature, such as machining, fitting and erecting; in some cases they were helped by provision of adequate handling equipment and a judicious use of men for the heavier tasks.<sup>3</sup>

The extent to which women were introduced in work connected with the maintenance, repair and running of the railways and replaced men constituted a rather spectacular wartime development. A complete list of the jobs that women were doing in this field would be difficult to compile. Among the heavy jobs that women took up may be mentioned their employment in certain sections of boiler construction, in the smithy and foundry, manoeuvring heavy crane loads, loading and unloading railway trucks<sup>4</sup>, and performing a large proportion of routine maintenance work on permanent way and rolling stock.

### *Scope of Women's Employment*

Women proved very successful and were extensively used on repetitive and precision work; on drilling, riveting, assembly work and on welding. While it is difficult to make a detailed study of all occupations on which women were engaged in industry, it would be interesting to note here the scope of women's employment in two industries into which female labour was only introduced in relatively large proportions on account of the war emergency: the shipbuilding and the iron and steel industries.

In shipbuilding, women were extensively used on welding, electric wiring and painting, work which is well within their physical strength and ability. In the shops and sheds, as in all departments, women were commonly employed as cleaners, labourers, crane drivers, and on clerical work. A list is given below of work in which women's employment was common practice; there were other types of work which women performed in shops and sheds in shiprepairing yards, but not to the extent of those mentioned here:

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<sup>1</sup> *Idem*, Feb. 1944, p. 83; Dec. 1943, p. 622.

<sup>2</sup> *Idem*, Mar. 1944, p. 117.

<sup>3</sup> *Idem*, Aug. 1943, p. 409.

<sup>4</sup> *Idem*, Nov. 1943, p. 541; Dec. 1943, p. 616; Feb. 1944, p. 90.

<i>Blacksmiths' Shop</i>	<i>Paint Shop</i>
Hammer drivers	Red leaders
Pin drillers	
<i>Caulking and Testing Shop</i>	<i>Pattern Shop</i>
Burners' helpers	Painters
Packers	
<i>Drawing Office</i>	<i>Plater's Shed</i>
Tracers	Burners' mates
	Markers
<i>Electrical Shop</i>	Platers' helpers
Clip makers	Scarfig machine operators
Drillers	Shearing machine operators
Engraving machine operators	
Fitting or repair and reconditioning of such units as:	<i>Plumber's Shop</i>
Arc welding resistance	Drillers
Current breaker for generator	Plumbers' assistants
Distribution box (fuse and switches)	Saw-pipe cutting machine operators
Electro-megaphone	Screwing machine operators
Junction box	
Motor starter for submarine	<i>Sail Loft</i>
Remote control switches	Canvas cover makers
Ship's telephone	Pipe ladders
Wireless deck insulators	
Mica moulders	<i>Sheet-Iron Shop</i>
Painters	Sheet-metal workers' assistants
	Welders (oxy-acetylene)
<i>Fitting Shop and Ship Mechanic's Shop</i>	
Drillers (all types, including radial arm)	<i>Shipwright's Shop</i>
Engraving machine operators	Drillers
Hacksaw machine operators	
Screwing machine operators	<i>Stores</i>
Shapers	Counter hands
	Storekeepers' assistants
<i>Foundry</i>	
Core-makers	<i>Welder's Shop</i>
(also dressers, driers, oven workers)	Welders (oxy-acetylene)
Electricians' assistants	
Fettlers	
Sand millers	<i>Yard</i>
	Gatehouse keepers
<i>Joiners and Woodworking Machinists' Shops</i>	Scrap sorters
Boxers	Transport workers
Joiners' helpers	(including shifting vessels in wet dock)
Jointers	Truck drivers
Gluers	Wagon checkers
Polishers	
Sandpapering machine operators	<i>Coppersmiths' Shop</i>
Sawyers' helpers	Coppersmiths' assistants
Varnishers	

Women also worked aboard ships, on such occupations as cleaning, red leading, assisting joiners, drilling and tapping bulk-heads for fittings of all kinds, operating Cyc. Arc Stud fusing machine, painting, electric wiring, polishing.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND NATIONAL SERVICE: *Women in Shipbuilding* (1943).

The following list<sup>1</sup> gives a few of the categories of work in which women have been successfully employed in the iron and steel industry in one important region:

*Steel-Melting Occupations*

Siemens melting  
General labourer  
Electric melting  
Scrap unloader and sorter  
Unloader: refractories  
Melting  
Derrick controller, stamper,  
brickmoulder, compound filler,  
crane driver, scrap burner

*Steel-Rolling Occupations*

Billet rolling  
Control operator Checker  
Recorder Loader  
Crane driver Swing grinder  
Billet painter General  
Saw labourer labourer  
Sheet rolling  
Polishing Stock-keeper  
machine operator Packer  
Shears operator Scrap cutter  
Examiner and sorter  
Weigher Control  
Softening furnace operator  
Bar mill  
General labourer, examiner  
Heat treatment  
Crane driver, checker  
General labourer, Brinell tester

*Maintenance Occupations*

Machine shops  
Crane driver, labourer, machinist  
Fitting shops  
Machine hacksaw operator, oiler  
Storekeeper, greaser  
Blacksmith  
Hammer driver

Boilersmith  
Welder Driller  
Plate helper  
Pattern and joiner's shops  
Small saw General  
operator labourer  
Garage  
Car driver Labourer  
Plumbers  
Brazier Welder  
Foundry  
Moulder's labourer Core-maker  
Traffic  
Wagon checker Locomotive  
cleaner  
Locomotive driver Truck driver  
(Narrow gauge) Wagon painter  
Wagon oiler  
Bricklayer  
Brick dresser Labourer

*Miscellaneous Occupations*

Stores  
Issuing stores Storekeeping  
Checking stocks  
Test house and research  
Machinist Labourer  
Sample checker  
Laboratory  
Sample girl Assistant  
Ambulance  
First aid, etc.  
Works and offices  
Clerical  
Not specified  
Circular plate burner  
(oxy-ferrolene)

## CONDITIONS OF WORK

### *Hours of Work*

At the beginning of the war, under the pressure of the demands from service departments for greatly increased supplies, particularly in war industries, it was necessary to relax the legislation on hours of work in order to meet immediate difficulties.

<sup>1</sup> *Engineering Bulletin*, Sept. 1942, pp. 206, 210.

Authority for extending the hours existed both in the Factory Law itself and in the emergency regulations—Regulations 59 of the Defence (General) Regulations of 1939. Under the Factories Act, 1937 (which came into force on 1 July 1938), the hours of work for women were limited to 9 hours a day and 48 hours a week. The beginning of the employment period was set at “not earlier than 7 a.m.”, and its end at “not after 8 p.m. on week days and 1 p.m. on Saturdays”. Section 150 of the Act, however, states that, as regards factories performing work on behalf of the Crown, “in case of any public emergency the Secretary of State may, by Order, to the extent and during the period named in the Order, exempt any factory from the Act”. Under Regulation 59—

the Secretary of State may by Order, to such extent, during such period and subject to such conditions as may be specified in the Order, exempt any particular premises or operations or class of premises or operations from the Factories Act 1937 if it is specified that such exemption is, by reason of circumstances arising out of the war, desirable in the public interest.

It was not possible to make enquiries into the urgent needs of each case without holding up urgent supplies in the meanwhile. Temporary arrangements were made, at the outset of the war, under which service departments could inform their contractors that, when necessary, they were provisionally authorised to work overtime (subject to a maximum of 60 hours a week) and to make certain changes in starting and stopping times, pending an Order from the Home Office formally authorising the precise relaxations of the Factories Act found to be necessary. These arrangements were soon terminated and, from then on, permission to depart from the Factories Act provisions were obtained from the factory inspectors and the Home Office.

The policy of the Home Office<sup>1</sup>, which had the responsibility of administering the provisions of the Factories Act, 1937, and of permitting derogations of its provisions, was formulated as follows:

It was essential to make it clear to employers and workpeople that the Factories Act had not gone by the board and that hours must be regulated through its machinery in accordance with a considered policy . . . It was important that the position at individual factories should be reviewed at fairly short intervals, especially during the first few months of the war, in order to see that, with an expansion of staff where reasonable and practicable and with a better organisation

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<sup>1</sup> The functions of the Secretary of State under the Factories Act and certain other enactments were transferred to the Minister of Labour and National Service in June 1940, by Defence Regulation 58B (S.R. & O, No. 907), which was later embodied with modifications in the Defence (Functions of Minister) Regulations, 1941 (S.R. & O. 1941, No. 2057).

of industry for war purposes, over time would not be worked to a greater extent or for a longer period than was absolutely necessary.<sup>1</sup>

During the first five months of the war, the largest number of applications were made for permission to employ women and young persons for daily or weekly hours in excess of those allowed in the Factories Act, 1937. Orders permitting extended hours were issued, during that period, in respect of 2,459 factories. The hours authorised were often shorter than those for which application had been made, and, in some cases, the application was refused altogether. As many as 60 hours a week were worked in some cases at the beginning of the war; after enquiries, this maximum was, in nearly every instance, reduced to a figure not exceeding 57 weekly hours for women and young persons. Many firms which, at the beginning of the war, had been granted permission for extension of hours found it possible to maintain their output by some measures of reorganisation and with fewer hours than they had at first regarded as essential. Orders authorising the employment of women and young persons on a system of two-day shifts with turns of 8 hours were granted in the case of 299 factories, the hourly schemes being usually: Shift I. Six turns a week, from 6 a.m. to 2 p.m.; Shift II. five turns (in case of extreme urgency, six turns), from 2 p.m. to 10 p.m. The shifts might alternate weekly or fortnightly, subject to arrangements made to suit the need of individual workers. Usually a condition requiring the provision of a mess room was imposed by the order, with, when considered necessary after enquiries by the inspectors, transport facilities for workers living at a distance.

As regards night work, applications under Section 150 of the Factories Act for authorisation to employ women on such work were few at the beginning of the war and were confined almost entirely to factories producing armaments or engaged in processes incidental to armament production; in the first five months of the war only 102 orders of this nature were granted. The system authorised was usually one of the following: (a) a system of three 8-hour shifts in 24 hours with an interval of at least half an hour for meals and rest in each turn; (b) a system of day and night shifts allowing a weekly total of working hours of about 54 for the day shift and 50 for the night shift; intervals for meals and rest, amounting to at least one hour, were imposed for each turn. The orders usually provided for a short Saturday and only five turns a week.

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<sup>1</sup> HOME OFFICE: *Report on Hours of Employment of Women and Young Persons in Factories during the First Five Months of the War* (Cmd. 6182, H.M. Stationery Office, London, Mar. 1940).

Care was taken to ensure that suitable facilities were provided to supplement the welfare provisions of the Factories Act. Special conditions as regards messrooms, adequate supervision and suitable transport facilities were included in each order permitting the employment of women on night work.<sup>1</sup>

When France capitulated, "little heed was paid to formalities in connection with Emergency Orders" and, in some cases, the weekly hours of work reached "extravagant proportions".<sup>2</sup>

At the end of July 1940, however, the hours of employment of women and young persons were again brought under control and the hours authorised were usually well within the limits provided for in the General Emergency Order for Engineering and Certain Other Classes of Works which was issued on 26 June 1940.<sup>3</sup> This Order, made under Section 150 of the Factories Act, 1937, and Regulations 58*b* and 59 of the Defence (General) Regulations, 1939, covered most of the armament industries and provided for the extended hours of the employment of women and young persons according to four different schemes. Permission in writing for such relaxation of the standards had to be obtained from the inspector of factories for the district. This permission was granted for a limited period only and might be revoked at any time by the inspector if he was not satisfied that the conditions as laid down in the Order were being complied with or if so directed by the Ministry of Labour and National Service. The Order provided for the following extended hours of work schemes:

(a) The three-shift system. Each shift shall not exceed an average of an 8-hour day calculated over a period which shall not, unless specially authorised by the district inspector, exceed four weeks. The morning turn shall not begin earlier than 6 a.m. and the afternoon turn shall end not later than 11 p.m. Rest periods are fixed in such a way that no working spells exceed  $4\frac{1}{2}$  hours, or, where a fixed interval of not less than 10 minutes is allowed in the course of the spell, 5 hours. The scheme also includes provision for a suitable mess room for the workers and for the supervision of the women by a forewoman or a welfare supervisor when they are employed on the night turn.

(b) The two day-shift system. Conditions for hours, rest periods and welfare provisions are the same as for scheme (a). Subject to arrangements to suit individual workers, women or young persons should not be employed on the afternoon turn for more than two consecutive weeks.

(c) The two day-and-night-shift system. The total hours worked by each shift are limited to an average of 60 hours a week, calculated, unless specially

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<sup>1</sup> *Report on Hours of Employment of Women and Young Persons during the First Five Months of the War, op. cit.*

<sup>2</sup> *Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories, for the Year 1940* (Cmd. 6316, H. M. Stationery Office, London, Oct. 1941).

<sup>3</sup> Factories Act, 1937: Hours of Women and Young Persons, General Emergency Order for Engineering and Certain Other Classes of Work.



authorised by the district inspector, over a period of four weeks. The interval between successive turns shall not be less than eleven hours and a break of not less than 24 hours provided in every period of seven consecutive days. Employment on the night turn shall not, subject to arrangements to suit the convenience of individual workers, be continued for more than two consecutive weeks. The scheme provides for rest breaks and for the maximum length of the spell of work. Provision for an adequate mess room and for the supervision of women workers employed on the night turn is also made.

(d) The extended day-work system. The employment of women and young persons may be extended up to 60 hours a week, 11 hours a day for five days of the week and 8 hours on another day of that week as may be specified in writing by the district inspector. Employment shall not begin earlier than 6 a.m. and shall end not later than 9 p.m. or, on short days, at 5 p.m. The Order provides for one day of rest per week for the workers employed on such shifts. Rest and meal periods are also fixed.

Other schemes might be adopted and meals might be fixed at different intervals for different sets of workers if the occupier of the factory made arrangements to the satisfaction of the district inspector to enable the different sets to be identified. On special occasions, the inspector of the factory might authorise that women and young persons be employed on specific work under certain conditions for a seventh turn on a seventh day in the week.

When the control of the hours of work of women and young persons was thus resumed in July 1940, the problem of securing, when desirable, seven days' production from the plant—and, at the same time, complying with the provision of the Order for one day of rest per week—was solved by various local schemes, such as week-end volunteers, or by the more usual method of adopting a rota system.<sup>1</sup>

At the end of 1940, the reports made by the inspectors in respect of permissions granted under the General Emergency Order gave a fair picture of the hours worked by women in the industries concerned. Of the total number of 5,493 factories holding such permissions, in only 171 was a system of three shifts asked for, and in only 282, a system of two short-day shifts. In the remainder, either a single shift or a system of day and night shifts was allowed, and the total weekly hours varied between 48 to 53 in 1,585 factories. In 1,027 factories, the weekly total of hours worked was either 55 or 56, and in 2,428 factories it was over 56 but not exceeding 60.<sup>2</sup>

In addition to "permissions" granted under the General Emergency Order for engineering and other classes of works, individual orders were in force at the end of 1940 in 158 other engineering

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<sup>1</sup> *Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories, for the Year 1940, op. cit.*, pp. 18-21.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

works permitting slight variations of the schemes of hours allowed by the General Order. Individual orders were also in force in 907 factories engaged in other industries (textiles, food and drink, clothing, rubber, paper and cardboard, etc.).<sup>1</sup>

Emergency Orders under the Factories Act, 1937, granted in certain cases where women replaced men called to the forces or transferred to other work of national importance, were made, not necessarily for overtime, but for the adjustment of permissible hours of work which would enable women to work the same, or approximately the same, hours as men. Thus night work for women over 18 years of age was allowed in the paper industry and in the glass industry. Orders were granted in maltheuses to permit Sunday work for women, and in some bakehouses orders were enforced enabling women over 18 to be employed on shifts which included night turns.<sup>2</sup>

Since 1940, the General Emergency Order for engineering and certain other classes of works has been renewed after slight modifications and has remained in force since then without changes.

In 1941 and 1942, other orders covering whole industries and comparable to the Order for the engineering trades were issued for the potteries industry (this Order was revoked in May 1942)<sup>3</sup>, for work in flour mills<sup>4</sup>, for the cotton industry (which was not renewed after August 1942).<sup>5</sup> An important order was issued early in January 1942, providing for the extension of hours of employment to 48 and up to a maximum of not more than 55 hours weekly in industries not covered by the General Emergency Order for Engineering.<sup>6</sup>

In 1943, an Order as to hours of work was issued for women employed in electrical stations.<sup>7</sup>

Figures showing the number of permissions granted for the extension of working hours indicate a remarkable increase during the war.

<sup>1</sup> *Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories, for the year 1940, op. cit., pp. 18-21.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> General Emergency Order of 23 December 1941, for potteries; this Order was revoked as from 3 May 1942 (cf. *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, Feb. 1942, p. 53; May 1942, p. 107).

<sup>4</sup> Flour Mills (Hours, Safety and Welfare) Order, 1942, Statutory Rules and Orders, 1942, No. 202.

<sup>5</sup> General Emergency Order of 5 February 1942, for cotton spinning and doubling (see *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, Apr. 1942, p. 99; July 1942, p. 135).

<sup>6</sup> Hours of Day Work in Factories (Women and Young Persons) Order, 1942 (see *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, Feb. 1942, p. 34).

<sup>7</sup> Electricity Supply (Hours, Safety and Welfare) Order, 1943 (see *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, Feb. 1943, p. 23).

The following figures represent the number of permissions granted under the General Order for Engineering in 1940, 1942, 1943 and 1944:

1940.....	5,493 (1)
early part of 1942.....	9,129 (1)
end of 1942.....	13,266 (2)
1943.....	15,776 (3)
1944.....	14,302 (4)

*Note:* The figures in brackets indicate that the information is derived from the *Annual Reports of the Chief Inspector of Factories*, for (1) 1941, (2) 1942, (3) 1943, and (4) 1944.

For other Orders, corresponding figures are:

	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944
Flour Milling Orders...	—	—	74 (2)	82 (3)	87 (4)
Hours of Day Work					
Order.....	—	—	5,862 (2)	7,517 (3)	7,373 (4)
Electricity Order.....	—	—	—	52 (3)	55 (4)
Individual Orders.....	1,065 (1)	1,991 (2)	1,395 (2)	1,605 (3)	1,500 (4)

Early in 1942, of 10,000 factories holding permissions to employ women and young persons on a system of day and night shifts or for more than 48 hours a week on a day shift, inspectors of factories found that the permitted hours were between 55 and 60 in rather less than half the cases.<sup>1</sup> This proportion tended to decrease in the following years, particularly from the latter part of 1942, when about 70 per cent. of the emergency provisions were given for 55 hours or less; in a number of cases, factories returned to their normal working hours, with little or no difference in output.<sup>2</sup>

In 1943, "inspectors, without exception commented on the general reduction in hours... and said that the usual weekly total of hours actually worked was settling down to round about a 50 to 52 hours' week in the case of women and young persons over 16", although longer hours were still being worked in some factories.<sup>3</sup> In an enquiry made in the principal industries by the Ministry of Labour and National Service, it was found that, including all overtime and excluding all time lost, the average number of hours worked in the first pay week of July 1943 were 45.9 for women 18 years and over, showing, however, an increase over October 1938, when the average hours were 43.5 in the last pay week. The corresponding figures for men were 52.9 (July 1943) and 47.7

<sup>1</sup> *Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories, for the Year 1941* (Cmd. 6397, H.M. Stationery Office, London, Sept. 1942), p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> *Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories, for the Year 1942* (Cmd. 6471, H.M. Stationery Office, London, Sept. 1943), p. 36.

<sup>3</sup> *Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories, for the Year 1943* (Cmd. 6563, H.M. Stationery Office, London, Oct. 1944), p. 20.

(October 1938).<sup>1</sup> It was estimated in July 1944, that the average weekly hours for adult women had decreased to 44.6.<sup>2</sup>

In the Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories it was stated that "the year 1943 has shown a greater appreciation of the fact that production is not in direct ratio to the hours worked".<sup>3</sup>

It was thought that the change in hours, though in some cases small, might have a measurable effect on output, and the Industrial Health Research Board (Medical Research Council) designed an investigation to ascertain whether, and to what extent, such an effect occurred. The survey, which was carried out in 7 factories and covered 21 groups of workers (about 4,000 persons), was chiefly concerned with women. The extent of the reduction in hours varied widely at the factories concerned but, in most cases, it was between 3 and 8 per cent.; the investigation showed that, on an average, hourly output was 4.1 per cent. higher in the 12 weeks following the reduction in hours of work than it was before the change; in some cases, the increase in the hourly output after the change ranged from 11 to 21 per cent.; in only six groups was there a decrease in the rate of output following the reduction in hours of work. These results, however, were influenced by external factors operating simultaneously with the reduction in hours of work and tended to obscure the effects of the latter on output.<sup>4</sup> The Report of the Industrial Health Research Board suggests that shortening of a working week may directly result in increased output and most probably in less absenteeism, but that the effect may be relatively small.<sup>5</sup>

### *Trends in Women's Earnings*

Trends in women's wartime earnings were due to various factors. Women benefited by the general increase in average earnings, although not always to the same degree and for the same reasons as men. The results of an official enquiry analysed below show that the general factors which filled workers' pay envelopes better were: (a) increase in rate of wages; (b) fuller employment with longer working hours and more extended working on night shifts;

<sup>1</sup> *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, Feb. 1944, p. 37.

<sup>2</sup> *Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories, for the Year 1944* (Cmd. 6698, H.M. Stationery Office, London, Nov. 1945), pp. 26-27.

<sup>3</sup> *Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories, for the Year 1943, op. cit.*, p. 19.

<sup>4</sup> Such factors include: changes in type or design of product; mechanical breakdowns and variability in the material which has to be worked; flow of work material; technical improvements in the design of the machines used; changes in general lay-out of the work; and personal factors (such as wage problems and labour-management relations).

<sup>5</sup> *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, July 1944, p. 109.

(c) extension of systems of payment by results and increased output by the workers affected; and (d) changes in the proportion of men, boys, women and girls employed in different industries and occupations.<sup>1</sup> This last factor had no doubt more effect on women's earnings than on those of men.

In the course of one of the periodical enquiries made by the Ministry of Labour and National Service on the average earnings in manufacturing industries generally, and some of the principal non-manufacturing industries in the United Kingdom<sup>2</sup>, it was found that from October 1938 to January 1944 inclusive, women's average hourly earnings in all industries had increased by 89 per cent. and the average weekly earnings had increased by 96 per cent., while men's had shown an increase of respectively 64 and 79 per cent. The average percentage increases varied widely in different industries and occupations. Calculated for the large industry groups, they ranged, as regards average hourly earnings, from 42 to 114 per cent. for women, while for men they ranged from 34 to 70 per cent. The average percentage increase in weekly earnings shown for women ranged from 49 to 115 per cent., and for men from 41 to 89 per cent.; taking into account the various branches in the industry groups the difference is even wider, ranging for women's hourly earnings from 29 to 137 per cent., compared with 26 to 82 per cent. in the case of men; and for women's weekly earnings from 21 to 134 per cent., compared with 30 to 104 per cent. in the case of men. As is pointed out in the Ministry of Labour's report, the fact that the average percentage rise in the earnings of women was greater than that shown for men was "partly due to the marked increase which has taken place in the numbers of women engaged on work formerly undertaken by men".

In most of the principal industries in which such increases occurred, the employers' and workers' organisations concluded agreements, as explained below, providing that where women were employed on work previously done by men they should be paid either the full rates for men or a specified proportion of these rates, yielding wages higher than those generally paid for work not regarded as men's work. Thus the greatest increases for women, both in average hourly and weekly earnings, occurred in the metal, engineering and shipbuilding industry group (105 and 115 per cent. respectively), in the transport industry (114 per cent. in both cases), in the treatment of non-metalliferous mine products (106 and 99 per cent. respectively), and in the chemical industry (98 and 100 per cent. respectively). For men, the corresponding figures showing respectively the

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<sup>1</sup> *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, Aug. 1944, p. 128.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 126-134.

percentage increase of average hourly and weekly earnings in the four above-mentioned industry groups were: 70 and 89 (metal), 46 and 55 (transport), 60 and 65 (non-metalliferous mine products), and 57 and 73 (chemical industry). These figures indicate that long working hours were, in the case of men, a more influential factor of increase in earnings than they were for women, as in all four groups the increase was much higher in average weekly earnings than in average hourly earnings. On the other hand, whereas the increase in average hours worked by men was, in fact, greater than that in the hours of women, it should be noted that the working of longer hours also affected hourly earnings, since the hours worked in excess of the normal full week were paid at overtime rates and the extra overtime payments were included in the hourly earnings.

In industries where women have been customarily employed in great numbers, and where the kinds of work performed by them were largely the same during the war as previously (although there was a certain extension of women's employment to men's customary jobs), the increases in their earnings, considerable as they were, did not reach comparable proportions, and in some cases did not keep pace with the rise in men's earnings. In the textile industry, women's average hourly earnings showed an increase of 65 per cent. and women's average weekly earnings an increase of 69 per cent., while men's rose by 60 and 71 per cent. respectively. In the clothing industry, corresponding figures were: for women, 48 and 55 per cent. and for men, 50 and 57 per cent. respectively. In the food, drink and tobacco industry group, women's average wages increased by 65 per cent. (hourly) and 61 per cent. (weekly), while men's rose by 52 and 59 per cent. respectively. In the leather and fur industry group, hourly and weekly average earnings showed an increase of 55 and 49 per cent. for women, compared to 54 and 62 per cent. for men. In this second category of occupations, the influence of longer working hours to increase men's average weekly earnings is perhaps even more evident. In order to see more clearly the effect of the new distribution of woman labour on the increase of women's average earnings in essential war industries, it might be preferable to compare the percentage increases in average hourly earnings.

The following table gives the percentage increases in average hourly and weekly earnings during this period in industries, where percentage increases for women are greater than in any other groups of industries.<sup>1</sup> In all industries listed in the table, agreements as to the replacement of men by women had been signed since 1940.

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<sup>1</sup> *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, Aug. 1944, pp. 126-128.

TABLE X. PERCENTAGE INCREASES IN AVERAGE HOURLY AND WEEKLY EARNINGS, BY SEX, OCTOBER 1938-JANUARY 1944

Industries	Women		Men	
	Hourly	Weekly	Hourly	Weekly
Transport, storage, etc., excluding railways.....	114	114	46	55
Treatment of non-metalliferous mine and quarry products.....	106	99	60	65
Metal, engineering and shipbuilding.....	105	115	70	89
Chemical, paint, oil, etc.....	98	100	57	73
Miscellaneous manufacturing industries.....	93	96	69	83

It should be borne in mind that these striking increases in women's earnings have only a relative value. If separate figures were available on the earnings of women engaged on work corresponding to that represented in the figures relating to average earnings in October 1938, the percentage shown for such women would be "considerably lower in many industries" than those given for the percentage increases in hourly and weekly earnings between October 1938 and January 1944, above indicated.<sup>1</sup>

#### *Wages of Women in Men's Jobs*

As a result of the extensive call-up of men for the armed forces and of the transfer of large numbers of men to munitions work, a scarcity of skilled labour developed in numerous industries. In order to alleviate this situation a number of expedients were employed, including the additional training and upgrading of workers, intensive training of "green" labour and the replacement of skilled by semi-skilled labour in jobs hitherto performed by skilled workers. In addition, industrial processes were broken down in order to make possible the employment of unskilled women on work previously performed by skilled and semi-skilled men.

The conditions under which unskilled and semi-skilled workers should be employed on skilled jobs carrying higher rates of pay were negotiated early in the war between employers' federations and trade unions representing the two sides of the industries with the greatest unsatisfied demands for skilled labour.<sup>2</sup> Women were not included in any of these arrangements until May 1940, when

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 127.

<sup>2</sup> For an account of the early stages of dilution of work in wartime and further details on the conditions of work included in the agreements reached between the trade unions and the employers' associations concerned with the employment of women in the engineering trades, and their training and placement as dilutees, see I.L.O.: *Labour Supply and National Defence*, *op. cit.*, pp. 138-142.

an agreement, covering the employment of women in the engineering trades, was negotiated by the Engineering and Allied Trades Employers' Federation and the Amalgamated Engineering Union. It provided that women brought into the industry under its terms should be regarded as temporarily employed. It did not affect the employment of women engaged on work commonly performed by women. Under the agreement women might be employed on work previously done by men on the following conditions:

(1) Such women workers shall serve a probationary period of 8 weeks at the women's national schedule of time rate and bonus;

(2) At the end of the probationary period and for a further period of 12 weeks, the women shall receive an increase of  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the difference between the national women's schedule basic rate and the basic rate of the men they replace; their bonus is increased in the same way;

(3) For a further period of 12 weeks the women shall be paid a basic rate equal to 75 per cent. of the basic rate of the men they replace and a national bonus of 75 per cent. of the bonus of those men;

(4) Thereafter, in respect of women who are unable to carry out their work without additional supervision or assistance the rate and bonus shall be negotiable and arranged according to the nature of the work and ability displayed. Women, however, who are able to carry out the work of the men they replace without additional supervision or assistance, shall receive, at the end of the 32 weeks, the basic rate and national bonus appropriate to the men they replace;

(5) Women who enter employment fully qualified to perform, without further training and without additional supervision or assistance, work previously recognised as men's work shall be paid the rate and national bonus appropriate to the male labour they replace.

Further, under this agreement women may be temporarily employed for the war emergency at women's rate and bonus on work commonly performed by women in establishments where women were not previously employed. They may also be employed on suitable work previously done by juveniles under 21; in this case the women are to be paid the national agreed scale of wages of women workers or according to the boys' and youths' schedule of wages, whichever is the greater. All changes made under the agreement must be recorded in an agreed register.<sup>1</sup>

The provisions of this agreement were also adopted by agreements between the Engineering and Allied Trades Employers' Federation and the undermentioned Unions:

- (1) Transport and General Workers' Union (22 May 1940).
- (2) National Union of General and Municipal Workers (22 May 1940).
- (3) National Union of Foundry Workers (29 May 1940).
- (4) Electrical Trades Union (5 June 1940).
- (5) National Union of Brass and Metal Mechanics (9 July 1940).
- (6) National Union of Scale Makers (22 July 1940).
- (7) United Society of Boilermakers and Iron and Steel Shipbuilders (26 January 1942).

<sup>1</sup> Memorandum of Agreement between Engineering and Allied Employers' National Federation and Amalgamated Engineering Union, 22 May 1940; text communicated to the I.L.O.



Agreements comparable to that described above were negotiated in 1941 and 1942 in some of the more important industries, including the following: brick manufacture, cement, cast stone and cast concrete products, the chemical industries, soap and candle, iron and steel smelting, rolling, etc., shipbuilding and shiprepairing, electric cable, boot and shoe, wholesale clothing, printing, vehicle building, flour milling, seed crushing, beet sugar, building, electrical contracting, road transport, railway service, rubber, electricity supply, gas supply, leather tanning, local government (non-trading services), and laundering. Similar agreements also covered such categories of workers as tool-making and tool-room operatives, spring makers, blacksmiths, sail makers and cinematograph workers. The principle commonly observed in these agreements is that women employed on work normally performed by men are required to serve a probationary period during which they are paid a fixed proportion of the men's rate. After the probationary period is over, women are entitled to be paid the full men's rate, provided that they are able to perform the work of the man equally well and without additional supervision or assistance. If additional supervision or assistance is required, women receive a rate of pay proportionate to the full men's rate, and many agreements provide that women's rates should not fall, even in these conditions, below a certain proportion of men's rates, usually 75 to 80 per cent.

Conditions of work for women replacing men on their jobs during the war have also been determined under the peacetime arbitration machinery for dealing with industrial disputes, *i.e.*, by the Industrial Court set up by the Minister of Labour and National Service under the Industrial Courts Act, 1919. An important award was made by the Court in April 1940, as the result of a dispute which had arisen between the two sides of the National Joint Industrial Council for the Municipal Road Passenger Transport Industry regarding the conditions of employment of women conductors replacing men.

The municipal road passenger transport undertakings did not, before the war, employ women conductors, but it became necessary, after the war began, to substitute women for conductors called up for military service. For many years, a voluntary joint negotiating body, known as the National Joint Industrial Council for the Road Passenger Transport Industry, had been in existence, and had agreed and fixed rates and conditions for employees in the municipal road passenger transport undertakings. This Council consists of representatives of the municipal undertakings and the trade unions concerned. The rates and conditions for the employment of women conductors were considered by the Council, but

it was not found possible to reach agreement between the two sides; thereupon, in accordance with the agreed procedure of the Council, the Council requested the Ministry of Labour and National Service to refer the matter to the Industrial Court for settlement. The Industrial Court on 19 April 1940 made the following award:

(1) Women conductors being employed to replace men shall be over 18 years of age.

(2) The scale of pay of women conductors shall be as follows:

For the first six months of service not less than 90 per cent. of the adult male conductors' commencing rate, and thereafter the scale of pay and increments applicable to adult male conductors in the undertaking in which they are employed.

Provided that, in the case of women under 21 years of age during such time as they are under that age, they shall receive not less than 90 per cent. of the adult male conductors' commencing rate in the undertaking in which they are employed. Women who during the service attain the age of 21 and have served for not less than six months shall receive the full rate.

(3) The conditions of employment of women conductors employed in place of adult male conductors shall be the same as those provided for in the agreement of 21 October 1937, in so far as they are applicable to adult male conductors, save that the guaranteed week may be for 40 hours instead of 48 hours, provided that all time work in excess of 40 hours shall be paid for at the overtime rates applicable to adult male conductors.

Following upon the issue of this award, the London Passenger Transport Board agreed with the Transport and General Workers' Union to apply the principles of the award to all women employees introduced to replace men on work normally performed by men before the war. Company-owned road passenger transport undertakings also agreed with the trade unions concerned to apply the principles of the award on all services where men only had been employed as conductors before the war and were subsequently replaced by women. In some company undertakings, women were employed before the war as conductresses under special agreements, and in these cases the employment of women was continued under the existing agreements, applicable to women. War bonus additions to wages, negotiated nationally, applied without differentiation both to men and women, whether or not the women were customarily employed before the war.

Other examples of awards by the Industrial Court on the employment of women on men's work are: (1) an award concerning women employed by the Ministry of Supply in the manufacture of explosives; and (2) an award relating to women on production work in the Yorkshire Copper Works. In these awards the principles generally observed in industrial agreements on this question were maintained.

As pointed out in a memorandum of the T.U.C. to the Royal Commission on Equal Pay, the application of the substitution agreements met with a varying measure of success. In industries where there was a clear demarcation between men's and women's jobs or where women had hardly been employed before the war emergency, the agreements were applied without difficulty. But in other industries, where there was no clear-cut demarcation between men's and women's work or where men and women had been employed on similar operations at different rates of pay, difficulties arose in the interpretation and application of the agreements.<sup>1</sup>

In the engineering and allied trades particularly there was a good deal of criticism that the agreements relating to the employment of women on men's work had not been fully implemented. This was the case especially at the Women's Conference of the Amalgamated Engineering Union held in May 1944. The kind of difficulty that arose over the Extended Employment of Women Agreement is well illustrated by the evidence which was given before a Court of Inquiry held in July 1943, under the chairmanship of Lord Wark, to investigate a position which had arisen in an engineering firm. In that case, the employers contended that the main body of their female employees did not fall within the scope of the agreement, as they were employed on operations which had been specially designed for women or on work commonly performed by women in the industry. The unions contended that in many cases women were paid women's rates for work which was alternative to male labour. It was stated in evidence that only about 4½ per cent. of the workers employed were skilled male workers. In its report issued in October 1943, the Court recognised that there were a number of operations in the factory for which neither men's nor women's rates were appropriate, and recommended that a system of grading and classification of jobs be worked out. This question has been taken up by the trade unions.

In February 1944, at a meeting between engineering employers and trade unions the unions made proposals for the grading of work in the industry, and for an agreement on the basis of equal pay for equal work—i.e., the rate for the job—irrespective of sex. Furthermore, when a claim for an increase in the wages of women employed in the engineering industry on work "commonly performed by women" was made to the National Arbitration Tribunal in May 1944, the unions (Transport and General Workers' Union,

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<sup>1</sup> TRADES UNION CONGRESS: *Equal Pay, Memorandum of Evidence to the Royal Commission*, Supplementary Report A (London, 1945), p. 8.

National Union of General and Municipal Workers, and the Amalgamated Engineering Union) made it clear that their claim was only an interim measure pending an overhaul of the whole wage structure in the industry.<sup>1</sup> A subcommittee appointed by the unions to draw up the scheme of grading for the engineering industry has arrived at the stage when it has been agreed to submit preliminary proposals to the employers for discussion.

Towards the end of the war, a number of disputes were referred to the National Arbitration Tribunal about the rates to be paid to women who claimed to have been employed on men's work in the engineering industry. It seems obvious that there are considerable differences of opinion between the parties upon the correct interpretation and application of the 1940 agreement relating to the extended employment of women in the engineering industry. This may lead to a joint review of the agreement with a view to its clarification on a number of points.

### *Post-War Planning and Equal Pay*

As has already been seen, trade unions and employers' organisations are negotiating for the establishment of a new wage structure in the engineering industry, according to processes and irrespective of the sex of the worker. The success of these negotiations would undoubtedly have far-reaching effects on women's wage rates in the engineering industry, and probably in industry generally. The application of the equal pay principle has repeatedly been urged by resolutions carried at trade union conferences; this was the case, to mention only recent meetings, at the two national delegate conferences of women shop stewards in the Amalgamated Engineering Union, 1943 and 1944, and at the annual conference of unions catering for women (T.U.C.) in October 1944; at the 76th Annual Session of the British Trades Union Congress (1944) a resolution on equal pay asked the Government to adopt the principle in all Government establishments and to enforce its application in all contracts carried out by the Government.<sup>2</sup>

A Royal Commission has been appointed under the chairmanship of Mr. Justice Asquith to consider the social, economic and financial implications of the claim of equal pay for equal work, and to report. The Commission includes eight other members (of

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<sup>1</sup> *Economist*, 23 Oct. 1943, pp. 563-564; 5 Feb. 1944, p. 192; 13 May 1944, p. 654; 29 July 1944, p. 162.

<sup>2</sup> *International Labour Review*, Vol. XLVIII, No. 3, Sept. 1943, p. 399; Vol. L, No. 6, Dec. 1944, p. 796.

whom four are women) whose interests cover employers, the trade unions, voluntary organisations, and the professions; it includes also an economist and an expert on industrial management. The Royal Commission began its work in October 1944. It will have to deal with the equal pay issue in industry, as well as in the public services and in other fields of employment.<sup>1</sup>

There is no doubt that the proposals of the Government for a new scheme of social security which includes provision for family allowances will, when implemented, have an important bearing on the application of the principle of equal pay. While the existing provision of services in kind will be extended, including meals and milk at schools, a weekly cash allowance of 5s. will be introduced. Children to be taken into account are those below school-leaving age and those remaining at school above that age until 31 July following their 16th birthday. Of these children, the first will not be counted for an allowance, although where the parent is in receipt of benefit, 5s. will then be added to the benefit in respect of that child.<sup>2</sup>

### *Compensation for War Injuries*

A wartime compensation scheme for personal injuries, covering gainfully employed persons, and members of civil defence organisations, was first established in 1939 by the Minister of Pensions, under the Personal Injuries (Emergency Provisions) Act, 1939. This scheme was revoked by another issued in 1940 and the latter was, in turn, superseded by a scheme issued on 10 April 1941.<sup>3</sup> The last-mentioned extended the payment, out of public funds, of weekly allowances to all civilians who were incapacitated for work by a qualifying injury (*i.e.*, resulting from warlike operations) for a period of not less than 7 days. The allowances were payable in respect of a period not exceeding 26 weeks, followed in a case of serious and prolonged disablement by the award of pension under conditions laid down in the scheme.

Women were not entitled to the same weekly rates of injury allowances as men, as may be seen by the following figures:

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<sup>1</sup> *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, 9 May 1944, cols. 1709, 1710; 2 Aug. 1944, col. 1380; 12 Oct. 1944, col. 1961.

<sup>2</sup> *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, Oct. 1944, p. 162. The Family Allowances Act received the Royal Assent on 15 June 1945, and gives legislative effect to the scheme for the payment of family allowances proposed by the Government in the autumn of 1944.

<sup>3</sup> The Personal Injuries (Civilian) Scheme, 1940, Statutory Rules and Orders, 1940, No. 1307; the Personal Injuries (Civilians) Scheme, 1941, dated 10 April 1941, Statutory Rules and Orders, 1941, No. 226.

TABLE XI. WEEKLY COMPENSATION RATES FOR WAR INJURIES, 1941

	Married man		Unmarried man		Women	
	Not in hospital	In hospital	Not in hospital	In hospital	Not in hospital	In hospital
Injuries which may be compensated on the higher scale....	35s.	35s.	35s.	24s. 6d.	28s.	17s. 6d.
Other injuries....	21s.	10s. 6d.	21s.	10s. 6d.	16s. 4d.	9s. 4d.

The maximum weekly rates of pension for 100 per cent. disablement were fixed as follows:

TABLE XII. MAXIMUM WEEKLY PENSION RATES FOR TOTAL WAR DISABLEMENT, 1941

	Male person		Female person	
	Aged 18 and over	Aged under 18	Aged 18 and over	Aged under 18
Injuries which may be compensated on the higher scale.....	34s. 2d.	17s. 6d.	24s. 2d.	14s. 2d.
Other injuries.....	20s.	10s.	15s.	7s. 6d.

Under the pressure of public opinion, a Select Committee was appointed by the Government, in December 1942, "to examine and report on the effect of the proposal that civilian women should be compensated equally with civilian men for war injuries, on the general principles of compensation, and on levels of remuneration".<sup>1</sup> In February the Select Committee issued its report<sup>2</sup>; its recommendations were fully endorsed by the Government, which decided that the rates payable to gainfully occupied women who have sustained a war injury should be raised to the rates provided for gainfully occupied men. It was also decided that non-gainfully occupied persons, men and women (including housewives), should have their rates of injury allowances and disablement pensions raised to those paid to gainfully occupied persons.<sup>3</sup>

The recommendations of the Select Committee became effective on 19 April 1943. Further, a new Order was issued in March 1944, which embodied these decisions, and, except in the case of a person who is under the age of 18 years and unmarried, fixed the rates

<sup>1</sup> *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, 25 Nov. 1942, cols. 750-826.

<sup>2</sup> *Report from the Select Committee on Equal Compensation*, 16 Feb. 1943 (H.M. Stationery Office, London, 1943).

<sup>3</sup> *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, 7 Apr. 1943, cols. 624-626.

of weekly injury allowances at 35s. for a gainfully occupied person who is not in hospital, or, being in hospital, has a wife or husband or a relative dependent on him, and at 24s. 6d. in other cases. Additional allowances are payable in respect of a wife or a dependent husband and also for each dependent child. As regards persons non-gainfully occupied, the weekly rates of the injury allowances are 35s. if the person is not in hospital, and 24s. 6d. if he is in hospital; widows who are in hospital and who have a dependent child are entitled to a weekly injury allowance of 35s. The maximum weekly rate of disablement pension for a gainfully or non-gainfully occupied person over 18 years whose degree of disablement is 100 per cent. was fixed at 40s.<sup>1</sup> As a result of the Select Committee's recommendations, a similar rate applies to the disability pensions payable to women, in common with men, in the basic grades of the forces.

### WELFARE

The extension of women's employment during the war created new welfare problems, while accentuating at the same time the necessity for the improvement of the well-being of women workers. In some respects, great efforts were made during the war and led to certain advances in the field of welfare. For instance, supervisory staffs in factories were increased and, although there was a shortage of trained staff, the importance of welfare officers for women workers was widely recognised and they acquired a definite status in industry. Similarly, the institution of canteen facilities, which expanded greatly, is likely to remain a permanent feature of factory welfare.

The care of pregnant women in industry has received attention from the authorities concerned, but the only concrete prospect of improvement in maternity protection concerns its financial aspect. The proposals for a social security scheme put forward by the Government include a plan for maternity benefits and grants, which will bring about a substantial improvement of the existing situation.

Other measures were taken under the stress of purely wartime conditions, particulars of which are given below. A number of these wartime schemes may disappear now that the war is over, but it is clear that the experiments made during the war in the field of welfare will not be wasted and that women workers who have had experience of factories with a high standard of welfare

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<sup>1</sup> Personal Injuries (Civilians) Scheme, 1944, dated 31 March 1944, Statutory Rules and Orders, 1944, No. 369.

amenities will not want to go back to those with inferior working conditions. Moreover, it has been found that welfare measures increase work efficiency.

Since welfare measures have a direct bearing on the rate of industrial accidents and of absenteeism, it has been thought appropriate to study these two questions within the chapter dealing with welfare matters.

### *Industrial Accidents and Safety Measures*

During the war, there was a sharp increase in the number of accidents occurring to female factory workers. This trend was already apparent in 1940. It is clear that the great influx of women into war factories and their employment on hazardous occupations and on work which they were not accustomed to perform was the main reason for the greater number of women injured. A very high increase in the number of industrial accidents was noted for 1941 in the report of the Chief Inspector of Factories and was attributed to "a . . . large increase in our factory population and, in particular, to a large increase in the number of women in our relatively dangerous industries". The main increase was in accidents to adult women "... a sign that during this year [1941] not only did women take up a great share of the work of making munitions but they also took up their share of the dangerous processes in that industry".<sup>1</sup>

In 1942, the Chief Inspector of Factories recognised that "the outstanding feature of the year . . . has been the growing importance of the work of women in factories".<sup>2</sup> In 1943, although the number of accidents to women again increased, there was a fall of about 3 per 1,000 in the accident rate of women employed in those munitions industries which were the chief sources of accidents to women. Several factors must be taken into account for the relatively small increase in the number of accidents to women in 1943: the industrial labour force in general had become more stabilised; in some places absorption of women had reached saturation, and women had settled down in their industrial work. But a number of women were transferred to the principal armament and munitions industries from those with a lower accident rate and this fact contributed to the increase of total accidents in these particular industries.<sup>3</sup>

The rate of women's industrial accidents reached its peak in 1943. By 1944, various reasons contributed to a decrease in accidents

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<sup>1</sup> *Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories, for the Year 1941, op. cit.*

<sup>2</sup> *Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories, for the Year 1942, op. cit.*

<sup>3</sup> *Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories, for the Year 1943, op. cit.*



to women, namely: (a) the fall in the number employed (a little over 4 per cent.); (b) the decrease in the number of hours of work; and (c) the fact that women new to industry were settling down to its conditions and imitating the safer methods of work of women workers accustomed to factory life.<sup>1</sup>

The following table gives the number of all reportable accidents to adult women, from 1938 to 1944<sup>2</sup>:

TABLE XIII. TOTAL NUMBER OF REPORTABLE ACCIDENTS TO ADULT WOMEN, 1938 TO 1944

1938.....	14,626
1939.....	17,029
1940.....	23,766
1941.....	42,857
1942.....	71,244
1943.....	73,065
1944.....	61,817

In 1941, the percentage of accidents (fatal and non-fatal) showed an increase of 42 per cent. over 1938; the approximate accident rate per 1,000 employed indicated an increase of 35 per cent. for adult males and 90 per cent. for adult females for the same period.<sup>3</sup> In 1942, the accidents to women increased 66 per cent. over 1941 and 389 per cent. over 1938.<sup>4</sup> In 1943, the total number of accidents to women represented an increase of 400 per cent. over 1938.<sup>5</sup> In 1944, the figures showed that there was a decrease of 12 per cent. compared with the figures of 1943.<sup>6</sup>

Accident figures for some specified war industries indicate the extent of the problems created by the introduction of women into new occupations in the principal war industries, which were by far the main accident producers in the case of women.

TABLE XIV. NUMBER OF REPORTABLE ACCIDENTS TO ADULT WOMEN, BY INDUSTRY, 1938 TO 1944

Industries	1938	1941	1942	1943	1944
Metal extracting, conversion, foundry, etc.	489	2,462	6,824	7,766	5,952
Engineering work (other than machinery making).	897	4,215	7,415	8,348	7,244
Machinery making.....	650	11,892	24,907	23,435	18,128
Light metal trades.....	907	2,128	2,671	2,999	2,790
Aircraft.....	43	1,845	4,735	6,612	5,730
General woodwork.....	148	—	1,215	1,492	1,513

<sup>1</sup> *Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories, for the Year 1944, op. cit.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Appendix II.

<sup>3</sup> *Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories, for the Year 1941, op. cit.*

<sup>4</sup> *Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories, for the Year 1942, op. cit.*

<sup>5</sup> *Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories, for the Year 1943, op. cit.*

<sup>6</sup> *Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories, for the Year 1944, op. cit.*

The really dangerous industries were still largely staffed in 1941 by men and large-scale engagement of women for heavy industrial work began only in 1942. It should not therefore be inferred from the figures quoted above that women are more liable to accidents than men. While they are more exposed than men to certain types of accidents, in particular to those due to loose hair and loose clothing, inspectors of factories found that women were safe workers, when employed on jobs within their physical capacities.

During 1943, women were still being introduced to unfamiliar jobs in a few engineering areas, in which accidents have continued to increase. In light engineering women do the greatest part of machine minding, while men are engaged as fitters and labourers on heavy work; women are therefore more exposed than men to mechanical risks. In one district, for example, 67 per cent. of the accidents on hand and power presses occurred to women, and in industry, in general, more accidents happened to women than to men on milling machines and power presses. The proportion of accidents due to power-driven machinery is 19.8 per cent. for women and only 14.4 per cent. in the case of men, showing the extent to which women are employed on light machine work.

Careful attention has been given to the question of accidents to workers, and various measures, including administrative readjustments, have been put into effect in order to bring about better safety conditions for workers.

In June 1940, the administration of the Factories Act was transferred by a Defence Regulation from the Home Office to the Ministry of Labour and National Service for the period of the war; the Factory Inspectorate, whose main function is the enforcement of this Act and the giving of expert advice as to the application of its provisions, was seconded or transferred to the latter department.

Early in the war, it became apparent that a greater degree of personal attention should be given to workers by the management and an Order was issued in July 1940<sup>1</sup> which gave the Chief Inspector power to give directions on behalf of the Ministry to the occupier of a factory working for war production, or on work on behalf of the Crown, requiring him to make arrangements, by way of part-time or whole-time employment of such numbers of medical practitioners, nurses and supervisory officers as the inspector may specify, for one or more of the following services:

- (i) Medical supervision of persons employed in the factory;
- (ii) Nursing and first-aid services;
- (iii) Supervision of the welfare of the persons employed.

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<sup>1</sup> Statutory Rules and Orders, 1940, No. 1325.

At that time, however, there was already a shortage of qualified and trained personnel for the staffing of services.

One of the most efficient ways of preventing accidents has been by educating workers and popularising the safety precautions among them by the means of educational campaigns.

A specific "Campaign for the Prevention of Accidents" was launched in 1940 with the sympathetic encouragement of, and co-operation with, employers' federations, trade unions, and the technical and general press. For this campaign, the methods and the practical assistance of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents were called in and, since that date, the Society has worked in very close co-operation with the Factory Department. Weekly posters for the education of the workers and a periodic bulletin for the guidance of managements have been issued free to any firm that would undertake to use the system effectively and set up a safety organisation in their works. About 7,000 factories and other premises have taken advantage of this offer; it soon became apparent that courses for accident prevention would be necessary to meet the demand of safety officers, and courses held at Oxford and elsewhere proved very popular. Private firms have initiated safety programmes of their own. A firm, engaged mainly on engineering work, established, with the co-operation of the local inspectors of factories, a scheme for a preliminary training course of four days; the scheme included one safety lecture given by a member of the staff of the Factories Department. About 30 women passed through the course every week and it was found that the frequency rate of accidents to women who had attended the lectures was less than half the rate for those who had not attended them. After an analysis of these facts, the authorities responsible for the training reached the conclusion that the training course alone accounted for the difference in the two sets of figures. In the shipbuilding industry, the matter was taken up by factory inspectors; with the collaboration of employers, arrangements were made in Glasgow to call together safety officers (who have to be appointed in each yard under the shipbuilding regulations) in order to pool knowledge on safety questions, with a view to raising the standard of accident prevention in this industry. Many of the accidents were due to the greater use of women on dangerous machinery and processes, and to the inadequate provision and maintenance of guards by the management, and to the fact that inexperienced workers did not know how to use the guards. Owing to war circumstances, the attention given to these safety devices was in some cases insufficient. In the reports of the Chief Inspector of Factories for 1941, 1942 and 1943, it was emphasised that firms

should comply with the safety provisions of the Factories Act, 1937, and that workers should be trained in safety precautions.

Of the accidents occurring to women, many were due to hair becoming entangled in moving machinery. It was proposed from various quarters that the wearing of safety caps should be made compulsory by legal order; the Chief Inspector of Factories pointed out, however, that, apart from the difficulty of enforcing this order, which might prove unpopular, the safest protection was the guarding of machines by secure fencing. Many firms did in fact succeed in making women wear safety caps; and this was most successful when well designed and attractive caps were put on sale.<sup>1</sup>

### *Absenteeism*

The British Government took a close interest throughout the war in the problem of "absenteeism", both because of the importance of obtaining maximum production from the limited man and woman-power resources of the country and because of the special difficulties arising on account of the facts that a large proportion of the labour force was working on unfamiliar war jobs, perhaps away from home, that many of the workers, particularly women, were quite new to factory employment and that the worker's domestic life outside the factory was complicated by wartime conditions. The Government approached this difficult problem in several ways and some account of the measures which were taken is given in the following paragraphs.

It should at the outset be emphasised that, during the war, absence from work, in the United Kingdom, was frequently due to factors outside the worker's control and that deliberate absence from work for which there was no reasonable excuse was rare and confined to a very small minority of the workers.

A most important step was to encourage the development in industry of works committees or other appropriate committees, on which representatives of the management and of the workers can co-operate in the task of reducing absence from work to the lowest possible level. Such committees have a special value in convincing the minority of workers whose bad timekeeping is due to thoughtlessness that their actions are unfair to the majority of their fellows.

Endeavour was also made by advice and assistance to industrial managements, to improve the standard of personnel management

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<sup>1</sup> All data concerning industrial accidents and safety measures have been taken from the annual reports of the Chief Inspector of Factories (*op. cit.*) unless otherwise stated.

in industry, and special steps were taken in co-operation with the university authorities to augment the supply of trained personnel managers and welfare supervisors by organising courses of training for new entrants to the profession and for those already employed in industry who could benefit from further theoretical study.<sup>1</sup>

The various departments concerned undertook new responsibilities for the welfare of workers outside the factory, for their transport to and from work, for the care of children, for accommodation and for the provision of entertainment in leisure periods<sup>2</sup>, with a view to reducing the external causes of bad timekeeping to a minimum.

In 1942, following investigations into absenteeism at a number of factories, a pamphlet<sup>3</sup>, "The Problem of Absenteeism", was issued directing the attention of employers, works committees, and production committees to ways in which absence from work could be reduced towards the unavoidable minimum. This pamphlet stressed that a solution of the problem of avoidable absence from work was more likely to be found by establishments which looked for that solution within themselves by good personnel management and the use of an appropriate works committee or joint body of employers and workers, than by those that tended to rely more on external powers of discipline or punishment. Employers were asked to plan remedial action in the light of an appreciation of the war worker's circumstances and their attention was drawn to the following passage from a report of Government investigators:

To understand the problem of absenteeism it is necessary to appreciate the tremendous sacrifices made by such a large proportion of the workers in accepting what amounts to a destruction of their home life. Home life has always been a person's own very private business and has been the ultimate object and reward of his labour. Many Government departments, societies and individuals deal with "welfare". The matters dealt with under any "welfare" effort become very trivial when compared with a person's home life. A married woman with a house, a husband and children, already has a full-time job which is difficult to carry out in these days. Yet thousands of them are working long hours in factories. They are trying to do two full-time jobs. If they can carry on with a mere half-day per week off the ordinary factory hours they are achieving something marvellous. It is time somebody said more about women's effort on these lines, and more about the arrangements which ought to be made to enable them to carry on. It is not only married women's home lives which have been completely upset, although they are the group needing most consideration. Men's home lives are disorganised by the fact that their wives, daughters, parents, other relations and neighbours are all going to work or because they have been sent right away from their families to work. These major facts must be taken into consideration in forming opinions

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<sup>1</sup> See p. 43.

<sup>2</sup> See pp. 89 and 93.

<sup>3</sup> *The Problem of Absenteeism* (P.L. 106/1942), issued by the Ministry of Labour and National Service (London, 1942).

on absenteeism and in seeking remedies. They should not be confused with "domestic difficulties", but recognised as a tremendous sacrifice made by an enormous number of workpeople to help the war effort.

To assist managements to direct their control of "absenteeism" effectively the adoption of a model form of record drafted by experts and available to all undertakings was recommended.

A limited enquiry into absenteeism among women workers was made in the summer of 1942 by the Industrial Health Research Board of the Medical Research Council, whose conclusions<sup>1</sup> were corroborated and amplified in a study<sup>2</sup> published later by the same Board. The latter was based on a survey covering 60 factories of varying sizes. In peacetime it was usually reckoned that absence due to all causes should not exceed 5 per cent. of the possible hours of work, but it was not considered reasonable under wartime conditions to expect peacetime standards of timekeeping, and it was estimated that in wartime 6 to 8 per cent. for men and 10 to 15 per cent. for women would not be too high. In the factories surveyed it was in fact found that lost time among men usually varied between 5 and 10 per cent. of the possible hours of work, that women lost about twice as much time as men, and that married women might lose up to three times as much as single women.

All investigators agreed that one of the factors leading to increased absence from work was the wartime increase in working hours. In the pamphlet on absence from work managements were urged to try to arrange the planned hours of work of individuals or sets of workers with some regard to their personal circumstances, and to recognise frankly that many workers, especially women with domestic duties, could not be expected to work consistently 5½ days per week for long hours, and should, if possible, be allowed special working hours or planned absences in such a way as not to disorganise the work of others. Moreover, the Industrial Health Research Board had emphasised the importance of arrangement, as distinct from length, of working hours, so that there were appropriate rest periods and adequate week-end breaks.

Among other factors found by the Health Research Board to have contributed to absence from work in some cases were poor health and welfare amenities in the works, idle time—especially if reasons for the fluctuations in pressure of work were not explained to the workers—and wages problems of one kind or another.

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<sup>1</sup> S. WYATT, R. MARRIOTT, D. E. R. HUGHES: *A Study of Absenteeism among Women*, Medical Research Council, Industrial Health Research Board (H.M. Stationery Office, London, 1943).

<sup>2</sup> MEDICAL RESEARCH COUNCIL, Industrial Health Research Board, *Conditions for Industrial Health and Efficiency: Absence from Work, Prevention of Fatigue* (H.M. Stationery Office, London, 1944).

Among the external factors the Board mentioned transport and shopping difficulties and domestic claims. The Board recommended that every worker should help by taking an active interest in the subject of reducing lost time, and in particular the workers should obey the common-sense rule of hygiene and take varied and nourishing meals and enough sleep. They pointed out that sickness absence was the main cause of lost time in industry and urged the keeping of better sickness records to assist in reducing it.<sup>1</sup>

It should be added, as regards avoidable absenteeism, that under various Essential Work Orders absenteeism and persistent lateness without reasonable excuse were offences for which workers covered by the Orders were liable to prosecution and, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding £100 or imprisonment for a period not exceeding three months or to both such fine and imprisonment. At undertakings, however, where there was a works committee or similar body (see above) which in the opinion of the National Service Officer could appropriately deal with questions of absenteeism and persistent lateness, proceedings in respect of these offences might not be instituted unless the matter had been referred to the committee and the committee had reported on the matter, after having given the person concerned the opportunity of making such representations as he might desire. As stated above, these committees did valuable work in combating absenteeism and persistent lateness and it was only in the more serious cases that proceedings were instituted.

#### *Women Supervisors and Welfare Officers*

The employment of women in large numbers seems to have given rise to some difficulties, especially in the initial stages, for employers complained of high turnover and absenteeism among women workers, while the Minister of Labour and National Service, for his part, stated that one of his greatest difficulties in getting women into industry was a lack of adaptation on the part of management to the special employment requirements of women workers. A few measures were decided on early in the war in order to make sure that, at least in the most difficult or critical circumstances, all adequate supervisory staff would be available to help women to adapt themselves to factory war work and to deal with cases of ill-adjustment. The following responsibilities were laid upon the employers:

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<sup>1</sup> MEDICAL RESEARCH COUNCIL, Industrial Health Research Board: *Recording of Sickness Absences in Industry*, Report No. 85 (H.M. Stationery Office, London, 1944).

(1) In all cases in which Emergency Orders are made, under section 150 of the Factories Act or Defence Regulations, which allow the employment of women on a night shift, it is stipulated in the Order that "suitable arrangements shall be made for the supervision by a forewoman or welfare supervisor of women employed on the night shift".

(2) In July 1940, the Factories (Medical and Welfare Services) Order as issued provided that the Chief Inspector of Factories may direct any factory engaged in the manufacture or repair of any munitions of war or any work on behalf of the Crown to make arrangements satisfactory to the inspector for the employment of officers charged with supervision of the welfare of factory employees.

By January 1944, 4,774 factories had come within the scope of the Factories (Medical and Welfare Services) Order, 1940; special officers, who might be called "Personnel Managers or Welfare Supervisors" were employed in 3,395 of these factories; the total number of officers was 5,478.<sup>1</sup>

A memorandum was issued by the Minister of Labour and National Service dealing with the question of the employment of women in industry and emphasising the need for additional supervisory staff in factories.

The memorandum<sup>2</sup> recommended, in the first place, the appointment of a qualified women personnel officer wherever the number of women employed reached a substantial figure. This officer, who would become acquainted with the operations and organisation of the firm, should be given such responsibilities as to select and engage women; to arrange for meetings and for satisfactory accommodation for those who lived away from home; to provide women workers with information regarding conditions of employment; to take general responsibility for their physical well-being by ensuring adequate canteen, rest room and other facilities, and by co-operating in medical arrangements; to help new workers to make initial adjustments by keeping in touch with them, especially at the beginning of their employment, and by eliciting worries or grievances which they might have; and to consult with the management on matters affecting women members of the labour force. Dismissals should be made in consultation with the personnel officer and, in cases of dismissal for disciplinary reasons, the worker concerned should have an opportunity to state her case to the personnel officer before the dismissal was made final. In firms included in the register of those engaged in essential work, in accordance with the Essential Work Order, 1941, the personnel officer should be responsible for ensuring compliance with the provisions of that

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<sup>1</sup> *Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories, for the Year 1943, op. cit.*, p. 56.

<sup>2</sup> MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND NATIONAL SERVICE: *The Employment of Women—Suggestions to Employers* (24 Mar. 1941).



Order in so far as factory operatives were concerned. Finally, it was suggested that the personnel officer should interview every worker who gave notice. "Much valuable information might be gathered in this way", the memorandum stated, "and pointers obtained as to conditions requiring adjustment".

The memorandum noted that the successful introduction of women workers required adequate consultations with trade union officials and shop stewards. "These consultations", it stated, "together with any others dictated by local circumstances" would "make it easier for the change to be effected without internal friction".

Various measures were suggested which were designed to put women applicants at ease during the preliminary interview.

According to the memorandum, experience had shown that the highest labour turnover occurred during the first month of employment and that every effort should be made to reduce the turnover rate. Therefore, a definite follow-up plan for new workers should be adopted by each undertaking.

In December 1942, the Select Committee on National Expenditure recognised in its Third Report on Health and Welfare of Women in War Factories that "labour management has, in the last two years, won a definite status in industry", but acknowledged that many firms which had not previously employed women still had no adequate organisation for dealing with personnel problems, and that the responsibility for engaging labour was often discharged by a foreman or a promoted wages clerk. However, so far as Royal Ordnance Factories were concerned, while in their early stages of production, labour officers in the factories were insufficient in number and inadequately paid, an elaborate organisation now exists. A Director of Ordnance Factories (Labour) was appointed in May 1941; better scales of salaries were established; private firms were persuaded to lend experienced personnel officers, and arrangements were made with the Ministry of Labour for the training of additional staff. The Ministry of Supply set up a Welfare Board responsible for the supervision of medical and labour management services and the two Directors-General of Ordnance Factories were included among the members. In each Royal Ordnance Factory there was a senior labour manager assisted by a staff which, in some of the filling factories, included 60 to 70 people.

In the aircraft industry, the Select Committee noted in its survey a progress—although somewhat slow—in the development of personnel organisations. Aircraft factories began to realise the necessity for trained staffs when new problems arose owing to the large expansion of women's employment in the aircraft industry.

One of the main reasons for the relatively inadequate development of personnel organisation was the lack of trained staff able to occupy posts as personnel managers and welfare officers and, in spite of the training facilities opened during the war, there is still a shortage of candidates, especially for the higher posts. Thus the Report of the Select Committee recommended that, through co-operation between the Ministry of Aircraft Production and the Ministry of Labour, courses should be organised for the training of personnel managers and welfare workers for aircraft factories; these courses might also be useful in providing supplementary training for the existing staff in such factories. The schemes for training new candidates for this work, which have been organised by the Ministry of Labour and National Service, have been a great help in filling the gaps between demand and supply<sup>1</sup>; on the other hand, experienced workers have been transferred within the war industry, and the improvement of the distribution of suitable persons would, it was hoped, to some extent meet the demands for personnel managers. The Committee recommended that the Appointments Board of the Ministry of Labour and National Service should give consideration to a large use of older men and women with a proper educational background. The Third Report also stressed that the reception of new workers, particularly of women, some of whom had been directed, at public expense, to work away from home for the first time, was an important part of the work of the welfare officers and personnel managers. It also pointed out that failure to allocate workers to such jobs as are best suited to their aptitudes and to fit them into their new environment resulted in an unnecessary wastage of labour; this question of prime importance must be the concern of personnel managers.<sup>2</sup>

At the beginning of the war, the number of personnel managers and welfare supervisors was comparatively small and probably not more than 1,500. Some 1,500 to 1,600 were trained in special courses which were established in the early days of the war. A great majority of the candidates were later employed in industry but it was stressed by the Deputy Chief Inspector of Factories that "all these measures have been of great assistance but, of course, it would be idle to contend that they can compensate for the lack of training of pre-war standard and the years of experience that help to make a first-class personnel manager".<sup>3</sup>

Reference may here be made to the work of a private organisation—the Industrial Welfare Society—which was approved by the

<sup>1</sup> See p. 43.

<sup>2</sup> *Health and Welfare of Women in War Factories* (Third Report from the Select Committee on National Expenditure, Session 1942-43, 17 Dec. 1942), p. 13.

<sup>3</sup> *Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories, for the Year 1943, op. cit.*

Minister of Labour as an employment agency for the purposes of the Employment of Women (Control of Engagement) Order, 1942. The service which the Society renders to its members and to other industrial firms is to put at their disposal suitably trained experienced women to fill posts of personnel and welfare supervisors.<sup>1</sup>

### *Maternity Protection*

Under the National Health Insurance Act<sup>2</sup>, a mother receives maternity benefits amounting to £2 or £4 when both she and her husband are insured. The Select Committee on National Expenditure, when it made its report on the health of women in factories in 1942<sup>3</sup>, stressed that this sum does not cover the expenses incurred for the actual confinement and for the necessary pre- and post-natal expenditure. Legislation concerning pregnant women provides also for a statutory period of one month's absence from work dating from confinement.<sup>4</sup>

In its survey, the Select Committee found<sup>5</sup> that there was no common policy in industry as regards the treatment of pregnant women. In some instances employers provided suitable light work which would enable a prospective mother to continue her work for as long a period before her confinement as she thought fit. The Committee recommended that careful supervision be given to the amount and nature of the work performed by pregnant women and that this supervision could be undertaken by the welfare staff of the factories. The Committee recognised also that the statutory maternity leave was inadequate from the medical point of view.

The Select Committee drew the attention of the Government to the necessity of providing some form of financial assistance to women workers, before, during and after confinement. In most firms, no payment is continued during maternity leave; in some cases voluntary saving schemes are encouraged during the pregnancy and, when necessary, private funds provide some financial assistance. The Select Committee recommended as a temporary measure that a mother should be eligible for unemployment benefit over a period extending to two months before confinement and for a suitable period afterwards. This would enable her to breast-feed her child. In the view of the Committee this matter of maternity payments required "immediate attention".

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<sup>1</sup> *Industrial Welfare and Personnel Management*, Mar. 1942, p. 38.

<sup>2</sup> National Health Insurance Act, 1936, Ch. 32, paras. 32 and 57-72.

<sup>3</sup> *Health and Welfare of Women in War Factories*, *op. cit.*, pp. 16-17.

<sup>4</sup> Factories Act, 1937, Ch. 67, Schedule III, Part 2; Public Health Act, 1936, Ch. 49, paras. 204-205.

<sup>5</sup> *Health and Welfare of Women in War Factories*, *op. cit.*

Following the publication of the Report of the Select Committee on National Expenditure, the Government instituted enquiries to ascertain the extent to which women engaged in industry remained in fact at work to a late stage in pregnancy or returned too soon after childbirth. The sample investigation showed that, of married women claiming maternity benefits, about 5 per cent. continued to work up to one month before confinement; about 17 per cent. up to two months before confinement, and about 29 per cent. continued working up to three months before confinement. For unmarried women (spinsters and widows) the corresponding figures were 29 per cent., 57 per cent., and 70 per cent. Ninety-three per cent. of the married women and 45 per cent. of the unmarried women did not return to work within twelve weeks of their confinement. The investigation also showed that about 60 per cent. of those who were confined drew sickness benefit at some time in the six months before confinement and about 20 per cent. of the married and 30 per cent. of the unmarried women drew sickness benefit at some time during the three months after confinement.<sup>1</sup>

As early as 1942, the Industrial Welfare Society made recommendations concerning protective measures which should be taken for pregnant women in industry. The report included a list of the occupations which were considered dangerous for pregnant women and on which they ought not to be employed during pregnancy; it was suggested that monthly medical certificates should be required for all pregnant women, preferably after the third month and not later than the fifth month of pregnancy. Pregnant women workers should not remain in industry after the seventh month nor should they be allowed to go back to work before eight weeks after confinement. Before she was re-employed, a medical certificate should be required from the mother, stating the date of the birth of her child.<sup>2</sup>

The Government has put forward proposals for a comprehensive social security scheme. In the case of childbirth, married women would be, subject to qualifying conditions, eligible for the following benefits, which would also be available to unmarried women in all insurance classes:

- (1) A maternity grant of £4; and, in addition,
- (2) For gainfully occupied women, maternity benefit at the rate of 36s. a week for 13 weeks, provided that occupation is given up during that period; or
- (3) For women not eligible for maternity benefit, an attendant's allowance of £1 a week for 4 weeks.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, 20 Apr. 1944, cols. 388-389 (statement by the Minister of Health).

<sup>2</sup> *Industrial Welfare and Personnel Management* (Journal of the Industrial Welfare Society), July-Aug. 1942, pp. 104-106.

<sup>3</sup> *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, Oct. 1944, p. 163.

These periodical payments and grants, incidentally, are almost similar to those which were proposed in the Beveridge Plan.<sup>1</sup>

### *Wartime Nurseries*

An urgent need for nurseries was felt early in the war, particularly for evacuated children. Local authorities were authorised by the Ministry of Health to make arrangements for evacuated children by means of nursery centres financed by the Exchequer. In certain areas, when a special need arose to facilitate the employment of women on war work, the maternity and child welfare authorities were authorised to establish, with financial assistance from the Exchequer, special day nurseries for the children of women employed on war work. At a later stage, in the light of wartime conditions, it was decided that the expenditure for the provision of wartime nurseries, which had hitherto been met by the local authorities (maternity and child welfare authorities), was, after taking account of the payments made by the mothers, to be repaid by the Ministry of Health. These wartime nurseries were meant for evacuated children as well as for children of working mothers, and might be established wherever the need arose. Close co-operation in the administration of this programme was achieved between the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Labour and National Service.

The nurseries were, generally speaking, of two types: (1) part-time nurseries under the direction of teachers, in public elementary schools; (These nurseries were open during the hours which coincided with school hours and catered for children between the ages of two and five.) (2) whole-time nurseries for the full day-time care and maintenance of children of all ages up to five years. These nurseries might remain open for 12 or 15 hours a day and each was under the direction of a matron who was a fully-trained nurse (general or children's hospital). It was suggested that, when possible, a teacher should supervise the training of children between two and five years of age. With the extension of night work in factories, nurseries arranged to take care of the children at night.

The payments made by the mothers amounted to 1s. a day in whole-time nurseries (where the children received all their meals), and 3d. a day in part-time nurseries where no meals were provided (an additional 3d. was paid when the child received a mid-day meal).<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. *International Labour Review*, Vol. XLVII, No. 1, Jan. 1943, pp. 46-57.

<sup>2</sup> Circular No. 2388 of the Ministry of Health, and Circular No. 1553 of the Board of Education, 31 May 1941.

Progress in the establishment of nurseries was hampered for various reasons, such as the lack of equipment and buildings. In certain areas, where labour requirements fluctuated greatly, there was considerable delay in carrying out the programme, for it was not possible to foresee to what extent demands would be made upon these nurseries.<sup>1</sup> One of the most difficult problems was the shortage of staff; and various campaigns for the recruitment of additional staff were carried out by the Ministry of Health.<sup>2</sup>

Other arrangements were operated, in order to overcome the difficulties arising out of the shortage of nurseries or child-care facilities.

In certain areas, children of working mothers were looked after by neighbours or relatives. Sometimes a group of mothers would take turns to look after each other's children. This minding system gave best results in the north of England, where women worked extensively in factories before the war. Local maternity and child welfare committees encouraged a development of this system under a scheme for registered daily guardians. People who wanted to take care of working mothers' children were able to register at a local committee; health visitors inspected the homes and only those suitable for child care were listed. Women needing care for their children applied to the local committee, which introduced parents and prospective guardians to one another, and arranged for visits to the homes. All other arrangements were made privately by parents and guardians.<sup>3</sup> Some 9,000 daily guardians were registered; they could care for 10,800 children. The State paid them 4s. in respect of each child under five cared for on four or more days in a week, or 2s. for one to three days a week. These payments were in addition to payments made by the mother to the guardian.

Many employers established nurseries on their factory grounds in order to supplement the facilities for the care of the children of working mothers.

The development of wartime nurseries, however insufficient it might be, was, nevertheless, a proof of the efforts which were made in this direction during the war. In December 1941, it was announced in the House of Lords that 200 nurseries for the children of women war workers were in operation<sup>4</sup>; in June 1942 this number had risen to 540<sup>5</sup>, and in February 1944, there were 1,500 registered

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<sup>1</sup> *Health and Welfare of Women in War Factories*, op. cit.

<sup>2</sup> See for instance, MINISTRY OF HEALTH: *Helping with Children Is a Real War Job* (1943).

<sup>3</sup> BRITISH INFORMATION SERVICES: *The Care of Children under Five in War-time*, England and Wales (New York, May 1943).

<sup>4</sup> *The Times*, 10 Dec. 1941.

<sup>5</sup> British Press Service release, 13 Dec. 1942.

wartime nurseries accommodating 70,000 children. Six hundred and eighteen of these wartime nurseries were affiliated with the National Society of Children's Nurseries and conformed to the standards required by that Society. In many instances, the nurseries themselves served as training centres for young girls who were taking up nursing as a career.<sup>1</sup>

### *Canteens*

One welfare measure which developed during the war was most helpful to women workers, namely, the organisation of workers' canteens. Owing to war conditions, such as the speeding up of production, rationing, workers living away from their own homes, extension of night work, and the necessity of feeding A.R.P. and fire-watching personnel, the establishment of canteens on factory premises was felt to be a necessity. An Order issued in 1940<sup>2</sup> provided that the occupier of any factory employing more than 250 persons and carrying out work on behalf of the Crown might be ordered to provide a suitable canteen for the supply of hot meals. Moreover, the Minister of Labour and National Service issued in March 1941 a message prepared in collaboration with the British Employers' Federation and the Trades Union Congress. This message contained suggestions regarding additional canteen facilities for workers, as well as breaks for rest and refreshment during long hours of work. It pointed out that the addition of these facilities at their factory canteens would not only be a real convenience to the workers but would also help to maintain the health and efficiency of the employees.<sup>3</sup>

Those responsible for the establishment of canteens in factories were faced with many difficulties, including the lack of equipment for their construction, owing to the scarcity of building materials and labour; there was also a great shortage of trained personnel to staff canteens. In spite of that, "firms have shown a willing spirit of co-operation and have carried into effect the technical advice given by the [Factories] Department's Advisers". By the end of 1942, 98 per cent. of the factories subject to the Canteens Order of 1940 had canteens in service or in active preparation. The idea that the canteen is an integral part of the factory was widely

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<sup>1</sup> *The Times*, 4 Feb. 1944.

<sup>2</sup> The Factories (Canteens) Order, 1940 (Statutory Rules and Orders, 1940, No. 1993). Similar orders were also issued respecting persons employed on building operations and works of engineering construction (Statutory Rules and Orders, 1941, No. 66) and persons employed in docks (Statutory Rules and Orders, 1941, No. 222).

<sup>3</sup> *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, Mar. 1941, p. 53.

accepted and factories which were not subject to the Order also established canteens on their premises, as is shown by the following figures<sup>1</sup> giving the number of factories having canteen arrangements in 1941, 1942 and 1943.

TABLE XV. NUMBERS OF FACTORY CANTEENS, 1941-1943

	Decem- ber 1941	Decem- ber 1942	Decem- ber 1943
(a) Factories employing over 250 persons and subject to the Factories (Canteens) Order, 1940.....	2,814	4,026	4,873
(b) Factories employing over 250 persons and not subject to the Factories (Canteens) Order, 1940.....	351	314	—
(c) Factories employing under 250 persons	2,530	4,141	5,704
Total factories with canteens.....	5,695	8,481	10,577

Some firms established canteens which, owing to their small size had, almost of necessity, to be run at a loss, but employers were ready to provide them, on account of their "benefit to health and happiness". In small firms, which, for one reason or another, could not get full canteens of their own, food was sometimes brought to a mess room in insulated containers from a British Restaurant or from a Central Cooking Depot.<sup>2</sup> However, during 1942, great attention was generally given to the improvement of the meals and the service and the factory canteen advisers (appointed early in 1941 and having special technical knowledge on the subject) devoted much attention to catering problems. In this connection, the measures initiated by the Ministry of Labour regarding the training of cooks for large-scale cooking should be noted, as well as the efforts made for the improvement of the conditions of work of canteen workers.<sup>3</sup>

With the extensive employment of women, the establishment of a particular type of restaurant service during the war was most useful, both to women workers and to housewives. It relieved them of their cooking duties for the mid-day meal and gave them time for shopping. From the autumn of 1940, public restaurants were opened in Great Britain. By the spring of 1943 there were 2,000 such restaurants, variously called, but usually referred to as "British Restaurants".<sup>4</sup> Mid-day meals are served in these restaurants at relatively cheap rates; they are generally controlled by

<sup>1</sup> *Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories, for the Year 1942, op. cit.*; and for the Year 1943, *op. cit.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> See pp. 42 and p. 108-110.

<sup>4</sup> LONDON COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SERVICE: *The Communal Restaurant: a Study of the Place of the Civic Restaurant in the Life of the Community* (London, 1943).



local authorities, although a few are directed by voluntary committees or other bodies who are responsible for their operation. These latter restaurants must, however, be recognised by the Ministry of Food. It is estimated that the 2,000 British Restaurants cater for an average mid-day clientele of 600,000 customers. According to a survey carried out in the London area by the London Council of Social Service, among 1,220 customers who were interviewed, 238 of the women were married (and most of these were employed) and 326 unmarried; a large proportion (more than half) of the women were in the 26-40 years age group. Six per cent. of those eating at these restaurants were housewives, coming sometimes with young children. A "cash-and-carry service" of cooked meals was established and, although it is not a large feature of the restaurant service, it is presumably patronised mainly by housewives.<sup>1</sup>

#### *Other Welfare Arrangements*

Among the tasks which female workers, especially married women, have to perform outside their work is that of shopping. In an enquiry made by the Select Committee on National Expenditure (1942), it was reported that many representatives of both managements and workers had emphasised that shopping was the most serious of the day-to-day problems with which the working woman had to deal.<sup>2</sup>

Since difficulties varied widely between different districts, it was found expedient to adopt local schemes to deal with local conditions. Steps were taken in this respect by the welfare officers of the Ministry of Labour and National Service. In close co-operation with representatives of interests concerned (including, if possible, representatives of Food Control Committees, retail trade associations, employers' organisations, shop assistants' unions and consumers' organisations) they devised local schemes designed to alleviate shopping difficulties.<sup>3</sup> In some cases, "shopping passes" were distributed to war workers, which gave them priority in stores<sup>4</sup>, but the most satisfactory solution was the concession of time off for shopping. Firms made their own arrangements in this respect. Full-time women workers were generally allowed one half day or one day a week for shopping, or, alternatively, one to two hours off twice a week (in the latter case, women were usually permitted to

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>2</sup> *Health and Welfare of Women in War Factories, op. cit.*, p. 16.

<sup>3</sup> *Production and Engineering Bulletin*, Dec. 1942, p. 141.

<sup>4</sup> *Health and Welfare of Women in War Factories, op. cit.*

make their own individual arrangements with the foreman). Sometimes an extended lunch hour might meet the difficulty, when there was a shopping centre near the factory.

Other schemes have been tried of which the following are examples. One firm adopted a system under which seven women were put on to a job requiring six in the assembly shops; this allowed one woman to be off for shopping and other household duties. In another firm, "official buyers" were appointed to collect ration books and orders from the workers and to do the shopping; this measure proved particularly successful. In some localities arrangements were made for shops to remain open during part of several evenings a week.

Firms found that the loss in working hours was compensated to a great extent by an improvement in the rate of absenteeism among women, in the women's morale and by better production. Shopping arrangements also tended to steady the supply of labour in factories where they were in operation.<sup>1</sup>

### *Welfare of Transferred Women Workers*

General welfare measures concerning transit and reception arrangements, accommodation, food arrangements, recreation and entertainment, special health care, educational facilities and holidays for transferred workers have been described in a previous I.L.O. publication.<sup>2</sup> From 1942, attention to the welfare of transferred workers was given by the Government departments concerned along the same lines as those which were indicated in this study, and further hostels have been opened under the management of the National Service Hostels Corporation Ltd. and other bodies. Voluntary organisations have also been encouraged to set up clubs and social centres for transferred workers when the existing facilities for recreation were inadequate. More than one hundred such clubs have been established since 1942, with financial assistance from central Government funds.

It may be interesting to give some examples to illustrate the work done by certain private organisations in providing accommodation and recreational facilities for transferred women workers. A number of voluntary associations, including a Joint Committee for the Y.M.C.A.-Y.W.C.A., had experience before the war in the organisation and administration of hostels for young women workers

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<sup>1</sup> *Production and Engineering Bulletin*, Dec. 1942, p. 141; Oct. 1943, p. 519; Nov. 1944, p. 504.

<sup>2</sup> I.L.O.: *Wartime Transference of Labour in Great Britain*, Studies and Reports, Series C, No. 24 (Montreal, 1942).

who were obliged, for various reasons, to live away from home. This experience was most useful during the war with the large-scale transference of mobile women to war industries. This Committee, for example, managed large hostels for workers in ordnance factories; they were run in conjunction with the Ministry of Supply. A typical hostel could accommodate over 1,000 residents. Each room had two beds, running hot and cold water, cupboard space and other amenities. There was a laundry which could be used by the residents. The hostels provided recreational opportunities in the form of cinema shows, concerts, dances, and educational facilities (library and various courses). There was a sick bay, staffed by trained nurses; a doctor and dentist visited regularly.

In conjunction with the Ministry of Labour, various voluntary organisations began to open reception hostels in 1941. Generally, they accommodated above 30 beds and the stay normally was one or two nights.<sup>1</sup>

A number of firms established clubs, administered by the welfare departments of the factories, for the benefit of women workers, especially those living in lodgings.

In one instance<sup>2</sup>, the firm leased a house which, after suitable adaptation, provided a large lounge, a dining room, a kitchen where the girls could cook if they wished, a writing room, dormitories and bathrooms. Facilities were also provided for the girls to wash their clothes, dry, iron, air and mend them. There were also a sewing machine, a cutting-out table and a long mirror. This club was open from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and from 5 p.m. to 10.30 p.m. on week days and from 10 a.m. to 10.30 p.m. on Sundays. The house served also as a reception centre where women slept on the night of their arrival at the new place of work, before going on the next day to their billets. The whole scheme was run in close co-operation with the welfare department of the firm. There was a housekeeper in residence to look after the welfare of the girls on the spot, but the actual management was in the hands of a committee of five girls, each transferred on war work from different parts of the country.

Another firm rented in the Midlands a "modern and attractive" house which served a threefold purpose: (a) as a social club for women workers, especially those living in lodgings, where dances were arranged twice a week, and occasional talks and discussions were organised; (b) a reception hostel where girls, newly transferred, might stay while finding suitable lodgings; and (c) an emergency

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<sup>1</sup> Information communicated by the Ministry of Labour and National Service.

<sup>2</sup> *Industrial Welfare and Personnel Management*, May-June 1942, pp. 85-86.

hostel for workers, men and women, who had been bombed out of their homes.<sup>1</sup>

### WOMEN IN TRADE UNIONS

The increase, both in numbers and status, of women workers in the wartime employment market considerably affected the position of women in regard to trade union membership. Not only did the number of female members increase in the unions that were always open to them, but certain unions—notably such unions as the Amalgamated Engineering Union and the Electrical Trade Union—opened their ranks to women for the first time.

From the end of 1933 to the end of 1939, the total number of women members in trade unions gradually increased from approximately 730,000 to approximately 970,000 in six years. After little more than four years of war, the female membership in trade unions rose, at the end of 1943, to its highest peak in history, *i.e.*, to about 1,870,000, representing more than 23 per cent. of the total membership. At the end of 1944, female membership had slightly decreased, to 1,805,000.<sup>2</sup> A few examples will illustrate these remarkable developments. Female membership in unions affiliated to the Trades Union Congress increased from 552,585 in 1939 to 1,210,000 in October 1943. In the Transport and General Workers' Union, organising women in engineering and shell-filling factories, road passenger transport, textile and general industry, there were about 300,000 women members in October 1943, compared with only 33,481 in 1939. From 1939 until 1944, the female membership rose from 30,000 to 250,000 in the General and Municipal Workers' Union; from 2,006 to 44,642 in the National Union of Railwaymen; from 6,350 to 21,843 in the Railway Clerks' Association.<sup>3</sup> Trade union organisation grew more rapidly among skilled workers, and women, broadly speaking, fell into the unskilled labour category in the paper and printing trades, and in the engineering and metal industries. In some industries, such as distributive trades, catering, laundries, chemicals and banking, where women's employment has always been considerable, trade union organisation among women workers was not so striking as in highly organised industries in which women's employment increased greatly during the war.

The place that women gained in the engineering industry was recognised by a unanimous decision of the Rules Revision Committee of the Amalgamated Engineering Union, as a result of which

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, Nov. 1944, p. 183; Nov. 1945, p. 195.

<sup>3</sup> Communicated to the I.L.O. by the unions concerned.

women were admitted into the union as from January 1943. In May 1943, at the first national conference of women shop stewards in the A.E.U., the delegates represented 84,000 women members of the 26 divisions of the union. In 1944 the female membership of the union was 130,096. Women and girls of 16 years and over are eligible to join the union. While there existed for male workers a purely wartime section, the members of which would discontinue membership in the A.E.U. at the end of the war emergency, no such provision existed for women. Women may elect their own shop stewards, who act in co-operation with male shop stewards, with equal rights and responsibilities. Women with the qualifications that apply to males are eligible to hold any branch office, with the exception of secretary, president or treasurer, and are subject to the general administration applying to other members. Female members hold special cards, but it was not contemplated at first that separate branches would be opened for women; at the first national conference of the women shop stewards of the A.E.U., the President of the A.E.U., Mr. Jack Tanner, explained in his presidential address the policy of the A.E.U. towards the women admitted to the union and said: "Just as we believe in the rate for the job and no economic discrimination against women, so also we believe there should be equality for the women in the union".<sup>1</sup>

Some attempt has been made to co-ordinate and organise the trade unions, in order to prevent undue overlapping and competition among the various trade unions. Four of the largest workers' unions concerned with the organisation of women in the engineering and metal industries (Amalgamated Engineering Union, Transport and General Workers' Union, National Union of General and Municipal Workers, Iron and Steel Trades Confederation) entered in the summer of 1943 into an agreement pledging the four unions to assist each other in getting a 100 per cent. organisation of women employed in establishments where they are jointly concerned, and regulating the relations of the four unions in this connection.<sup>2</sup> At the National Delegates' Conference of women members of the Transport and General Workers' Union, held in October 1943, a resolution which was carried unanimously called on group secretaries and committees in all areas to approach the other unions concerned without delay, so that similar campaigns could be launched jointly.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Communication to the I.L.O.

<sup>2</sup> *Labour* (official organ of the T.U.C.), Vol. 6, No. 1, Sept. 1943, p. 9.

<sup>3</sup> TRANSPORT AND GENERAL WORKERS' UNION: *Minutes and Record of the Proceedings of the National Delegate Conference of Women Members* (London, 1943).

## CHAPTER III

### WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

The Ministry of Agriculture had worked out plans, before the war, for the intensification of agricultural production should a war emergency arise. This programme was put into operation and British agriculture underwent important changes during the war.

Before the war, nearly 13 million acres were under the plough in the United Kingdom; by the autumn of 1944, over 19 million acres were cultivated, an increase of 50 per cent. on the pre-war figure. Not only was the acreage of cultivated land increased, but also agriculture was extensively mechanised<sup>1</sup>; by the autumn of 1944, the British pre-war tractor force had been more than trebled and every practicable means had been adopted with a view to increasing food production to the greatest possible extent. The great increase in crop yields, especially of crops designed for direct human consumption, made a substantial contribution to the saving of shipping space.

Because of the loss of men from the agricultural labour force and the development of British agriculture, increasing numbers of women were induced to work on the land. The additional women workers necessary for putting these plans into execution fell into two categories: in the first place, those who were enrolled in the Women's Land Army, a type of war service established to supplement the labour supply by recruiting women, mainly from urban centres; and, in the second place, the increased number of women who were employed in agricultural work outside the Women's Land Army.

#### THE WOMEN'S LAND ARMY

An auxiliary body of women volunteers, known as the Women's Land Army, was established under the Minister's plans on the pattern of the Women's Land Army which had been formed during the last war and had reached, at the end of World War I, a full-time

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<sup>1</sup> BRITISH INFORMATION SERVICES: *Farming in Wartime Britain* (New York, 26 Oct. 1942), pp. 1, 3 and 5.

membership of 16,000. Both Scotland and Northern Ireland organised a Women's Land Army.

In England and Wales, recruitment started as early as January 1939, under the National Service Scheme. By the end of 1939, 4,544 members were employed; in 1940, 8,305; in 1941, 21,736; in 1942, 52,955; and on 31 March 1943, 58,221; it was then estimated that there was one member of the Women's Land Army to every six farmers in the country.<sup>1</sup> In June 1943, they numbered more than 60,000<sup>2</sup>, and in June 1944, about 72,000. Early in the war, farmers were rather reluctant to employ women and this contributed to the fact that, at the end of January 1940, 16,650 volunteers were enrolled, while no more than 4,694 were employed<sup>3</sup>; and in October 1939, recruitment for the Women's Land Army had even to be stopped for a while, because the scheme had proved unpopular among the farmers.<sup>4</sup> However, there was never a lack of recruits for the Women's Land Army, a great proportion of which was composed of townswomen newly trained for rural work and life, and, as the figures have shown, "now the measure of the success of the Women's Land Army is the demand of the farmers for them. Early in the war it was often difficult to place recruits; now there are not enough to go round."<sup>5</sup>

The minimum age to volunteer was at first 18 years, with no other limit of age<sup>6</sup>; later women from 17 to 40 years of age were eligible for the Women's Land Army and had to be prepared to work in any part of the country. Women were enrolled as whole-time mobile workers for the duration of the war, but there was no legal measure to compel members to remain in the Women's Land Army.

The administrative machinery of the Women's Land Army formed part of the Manpower Division of the Ministry of Agriculture. The work of the organisation was carried out through a headquarters office and 53 county offices. These offices dealt with the interviewing and selection of recruits, arrangements for training, the issue of working uniform, the placing of members in suitable employment and the visiting and general supervision of employed volunteers. Each county office was assisted in its work by a voluntary county committee and a large number of part-time voluntary representatives. The county office maintained close

<sup>1</sup> *Economist*, 24 Apr. 1943, p. 537.

<sup>2</sup> BRITISH INFORMATION SERVICES: *Womens' War Work in Britain* (New York, June 1943), p. 6.

<sup>3</sup> *Sixth Report of the Select Committee on National Expenditure*, Session 1940-41, p. 34.

<sup>4</sup> *Daily Herald*, 12 Oct. 1939.

<sup>5</sup> *Economist*, 24 Apr. 1943.

<sup>6</sup> *Manchester Guardian*, 15 Apr. 1939.

working contact with the War Agricultural Executive Committee and with the county branches of the National Farmers' Union and the agricultural workers' unions.

Training for the Women's Land Army, which, until the war, was taken at the volunteers' own expense, was financed from Government funds after the outbreak of the war.<sup>1</sup> A proportion of Women's Land Army members were given a four weeks' training course for specialised or skilled work in the branch of farm work for which they were most suitable. The courses were given at an agricultural or farm institute or on an approved farm. During the training the trainees received a personal allowance besides board and lodging. Other members were placed direct in employment without preliminary specialist training.

W.L.A. members were employed in every type of farm work. The greatest demands were for dairy work, general farm work, and commercial market gardening. They were also engaged in tractor work, with ploughing and harrowing, and in drainage operations, with excavator driving. In forestry and lumber their work was also surprisingly successful, and between 3,000 and 4,000 Land Army members were directly employed by the Ministry of Supply as a Women's Timber Corps. One remarkable feature of the W.L.A. was the employment of skilled mobile units of women workers during the harvest season to tackle difficult jobs in all parts of the country; these units were often used for fruit spraying and other specialised work.<sup>2</sup>

The employment contract of members of the Women's Land Army was between the members and their employers, but was subject to certain minimum conditions laid down by the Ministry of Agriculture. Farmers who wanted to employ Women's Land Army girls were required to agree to pay them on a weekly basis and at least the minimum Women's Land Army rate, if the statutory minimum set by the Agricultural Wages Committee was less. In 1939, the average wage was about 28s. for a 48-hour week for girls over 18, and 22s. 2d. for girls under 18; in the spring of 1943, a Land Army girl was entitled to expect a minimum of 38s. In 1945 the minimum weekly wage prevailing in most areas was 48s. for women workers of 18 years of age and over, in agriculture, including members of the Women's Land Army, but the Land Army still took steps to see that none of its members, after meeting her board and lodging charges, was left with a lower cash wage than 22s. 6d. (or 18s. if she was under 18 years of age).

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<sup>1</sup> *Sixth Report of the Select Committee on National Expenditure, op. cit.*, p. 34.

<sup>2</sup> BRITISH INFORMATION SERVICES: *Women's Land Army* (mimeo. document, Dec. 1942); *Economist*, 24 Apr. 1943, p. 537.



## WOMEN AGRICULTURAL WORKERS

After the outbreak of war, the number of agricultural women workers substantially increased. It is estimated that in 1940, 44,300 regular female workers were employed in agriculture, showing an increase of about 10 per cent. over 1939. In 1941, their number was over 51,400—an increase of 27.5 per cent. over 1939. In 1944, they numbered about 70,000.<sup>1</sup> The increase in the employment of casual female workers was even more striking. In 1940, they numbered 43,400, showing an increase of 33 per cent. over 1939; in 1941, more than 61,300 were employed, which meant an increase of 87 per cent. over 1939.<sup>2</sup>

Under the Agricultural Wages (Regulation) Act of 1924, minimum rates of wages and the hours of employment to which they are related, were fixed for all workers employed in agriculture in England and Wales by 47 county wages committees. The average of the minimum rates so fixed in September 1939 for women of 18 years of age and over was 7d. per hour, or approximately 28s. per week; women at that time were usually in casual or part-time employment on an hourly basis. In 1942, the powers of fixation of minimum and overtime rates of wages were transferred from county wages committees to the Central Agricultural Wages Board (for the period during which agricultural prices are fixed nationally and a market is assured for agricultural produce), and in the following June the Board fixed in most areas a minimum rate of wages for women of 45s. related generally to a week of 50 hours during the 8 "summer" months and 48 hours during the remainder of the year. In December 1943, the Board increased this minimum to 48s.; the hours to which the weekly wage was related remained unchanged. In a number of areas, however, the weekly wage for women was conditioned to a week of 48 hours throughout the year and in a few to a week of 44 hours all the year round; the weekly wage in the latter cases, however, was 44s. For employment in excess of these hours during any week, a rate of 1s. 2d. per hour for overtime on weekdays was prescribed, and for employment on Sundays, public holidays or the weekly half-day the rate was 1s. 5d. per hour. The Central Wages Board, in exercise of the powers given by the Holidays with Pay Act of 1938, has conferred upon all workers in agriculture, including women, who are continuously employed for 12 months, the right to one week's holiday with pay.

<sup>1</sup> The 1944 figure is not comparable with previous years, as it excludes members of the Women's Land Army. Separate W.L.A. figures are given on p. 99.

<sup>2</sup> J. H. SMITH: *Work Output Capacity of Women Employed in Agriculture* (University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, 1942); *Economist*, 24 Apr. 1943, p. 537.

For men, the average minimum wage in September 1939, was 34s. 9d. per week. During the succeeding 9 months, this average rose to approximately 38s. and in June 1940, following the passage of the Agricultural Wages (Regulation) Amendment Act of 1940, which empowered the Central Board to fix a national minimum wage for men, a minimum of 48s. was fixed. The minimum rates for men prescribed in all counties were forthwith raised so as to be not less than the national minimum.

In December 1941, the Central Board raised the national minimum wage for men to 60s., in December 1943 to 65s., and in March 1945 to 70s. These rates were related to weeks of not more than 52 and 48 hours respectively in summer and winter; the current overtime rate for employment in excess of those hours during the week is 1s. 7d. and, for any employment on Sundays, specified public holidays and the weekly half-holiday, 1s. 11d.<sup>1</sup>

In the case both of male and female juvenile workers and workers lacking in agricultural experience, lower minimum rates of wages are prescribed.

In cases where employers provide certain benefits and advantages, *e.g.*, board and lodging or a cottage in part payment of the minimum rates of wages, the values at which they may be reckoned for the purpose are specified by the county agricultural wages committees.

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<sup>1</sup> *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, Mar. 1945, p. 45.

## CHAPTER IV

### WOMEN IN DOMESTIC EMPLOYMENT

Between the two wars the demand for domestic workers increased and the supply decreased. During the present war, large numbers of domestic workers joined the services, entered the factories or took up other forms of war work, and the shortage of private and institutional domestic workers became more acute as the war progressed.

Further, communal services such as British Restaurants, school meals, industrial canteens and hostels all made demands for domestic labour, while workers engaged on operational tasks such as the building of aerodromes and the Mulberry Ports also required the services of domestic workers. Special measures had, therefore, to be taken to maintain as far as possible domestic workers for domestic work of national importance and to increase the field of supply.

The domestic problem falls into three main sections: (a) institutional domestic employment; (b) catering industry; and (c) private domestic work.

#### INSTITUTIONAL DOMESTIC EMPLOYMENT

This employment covers hospitals and similar services, children's homes and evacuation hostels, schools and colleges and the school meals service. Domestic work in hospitals was regarded during the war as vital war work and steps were taken to maintain women in this employment and to induce them to take up this work as their form of national service.

No female domestic staff was withdrawn from hospitals during the war; on the contrary, domestic work was regarded as work of such national importance that it was one of the alternatives to the services open to women in the national service age groups and as priority work for women registered under the Registration for Employment Order.<sup>1</sup> In spite of this, however, women continued to leave the hospital service and the numbers entering were not

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<sup>1</sup> *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, Sept. 1941, p. 174; Jan. 1942, p. 6.

sufficient for the purpose as required and special steps had to be taken. The difficulty was that there were no standard conditions in hospital domestic work to form a basis on which women could be directed. In July 1943, therefore, the Minister of Labour and National Service set up a Committee under the chairmanship of Sir Hector Hetherington to make recommendations upon the minimum rates of wages and conditions of employment which should be recognised for the purposes of any special arrangements which should be instituted for meeting the needs of hospitals, establishments for the care of young children and of sick, aged or disabled persons, the school meals service and similar organisations for domestic help.

This report recommended that, for purposes of supplying domestic staff to hospitals and the similar institutions in respect of which the Committee had been asked to make recommendations, agreements reached by joint negotiating machinery should be accepted, but that where no such agreements existed the rates and conditions should be as follows:

TABLE XVI. WAGES OF DOMESTIC STAFF IN HOSPITALS AND  
SIMILAR INSTITUTIONS

Women 18 and over	Resident per year	Non-resident per week		
		£	s.	d.
Cooks.....	100	3	5	0
Assistant cooks.....	85	3	0	0
Special maids (matrons' and doctors' maids, senior housemaids, senior mess maids, sewing maids)	80	2	17	6
General maids (housemaids, ward maids, kitchen maids, scullery maids, diningroom maids)...				
With 2 years' or more experience of institutional housework.....	73	2	15	0
With 1 year, but less than 2 years' experience of institutional housework.....	66 10s.	2	12	6
With less than 1 year's experience of institu- tional housework.....	60	2	10	0
Cleaners—regular full-time workers.....		2	12	6
		per hour		
Part-time workers.....			1	2
Maids under 18		per week		
		£	s.	d.
Aged 17 to 18.....	45	2	0	0
" 16 to 17.....	35	1	17	6
" 15 to 16.....	26	1	7	6

The Committee also emphasised the desirability of hospitals and institutions providing adequate canteen facilities for non-resident staff and they suggested that where meals are taken,

deductions from the rates set out above should be made for meals as follows:

Dinner . . . . .	6s.	a week
Tea . . . . .	2s. 6d.	"
Breakfast . . . . .	2s. 6d.	"
Supper . . . . .	1s. 3d.	"

In addition the Committee estimated the value of emoluments for resident workers (board, residence, uniform, laundry and free medical treatment) at £70 per annum for women of 18 or over.<sup>1</sup>

As regards hours of duty, the Committee recommended that a 96-hour fortnight should be applied as a standard for all categories resident and non-resident in hospitals and institutions not covered by existing agreements. They recognised, however, that many hospitals could not immediately introduce this schedule of work and that for the time being it must be regarded primarily as a basis of payment. Overtime should be compensated by the grant of time off within the next fortnight or, where that was impracticable, by overtime payment at the rate of time and a quarter on the basis of the hourly rates of wages for non-resident staff. Enhanced payment for Sundays or statutory holidays were not recommended by the Committee, as work on those days is unavoidable and is the accepted practice in the institutional domestic field.<sup>2</sup>

Concerning holidays, the Committee recommended that after six months' continuous service, workers should be entitled to an annual holiday consisting of a minimum of a working week with pay, together with six statutory holidays or recognised holidays in lieu thereof. During the week's leave, in addition to the cash wages, a holiday allowance of 12s. 6d. should be paid to all resident staff.<sup>3</sup>

The Committee made the following recommendations concerning payment during sickness:

For employees with at least six months' continuous service:

During the first year . . . . .	3 weeks' full pay and 3 weeks' half pay
During the second year . . . . .	6 weeks' full pay and 6 weeks' half pay (less sick leave taken in previous year)
During the third year and subsequently . . . . .	9 weeks' full pay and 9 weeks' half pay (less sick leave taken in previous years)

<sup>1</sup> *Report of the Committee on Minimum Rates of Wages and Conditions of Employment in connection with Special Arrangements for Domestic Help* (Cmd. 6481, H.M. Stationery Office, London, Nov. 1943).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

In addition, an allowance of 12s. 6d. a week should be paid to resident staff when in-patient treatment was not being given.<sup>1</sup>

### *School Meals Service*

For the school meals service, the Hetherington Committee recommended the recognition of existing agreements, or where no agreements existed, the following rates<sup>2</sup>:

	s.	d.	
Cooks.....	1	4	an hour
Assistant cooks...	1	2½	" "
General maids...	1	2	" " for part-time workers
	£ 2	12	6 a week for regular weekly workers <sup>3</sup>

The Minister of Labour and National Service, in November 1943, accepted the recommendations of the Committee for the supply of labour and stipulated that the charges or deductions for meals should be a matter for arrangement between the employing body and the employees or their representatives, subject to the provision that the charges or deductions for full and adequate meals should in no case exceed those specified in the report and that working clothing where required would be regarded as a charge on the employing body.<sup>3</sup>

The report gave the Minister of Labour and National Service a firm basis on which to work and he announced that where the conditions in the report were fulfilled he would deal with recruitment to domestic employment in hospitals and allied services, namely, hospitals, establishments for the care of young children and the sick, aged or disabled persons, school meals service and similar organisations, in exactly the same way as to any other form of important national service, whether in industry or the services, according to the priority allotted to it and including the use, as necessary, of his powers of direction under the Defence Regulations.<sup>4</sup>

Accordingly for hospitals and allied services it was decided:

(a) To give first priority to domestic work in these services where the Hetherington recommendations are observed;

(b) To use powers of direction where necessary on the basis of the Hetherington Committee terms and conditions; and

(c) To embark on a publicity campaign in the hope that women would realise the great importance of the work as part of the war effort; that a number of volunteers would come forward from outside the classes of women subject to compulsion; and that wastage would be reduced.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>2</sup> *Report of the Committee on Minimum Rates of Wages, etc., op. cit.*

<sup>3</sup> *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, 4 Nov. 1943, cols. 868-871.

<sup>4</sup> *Report of the Committee on Minimum Rates of Wages, etc., op. cit.*

The result was that, in 1944, approximately 49,500 vacancies in domestic employment in hospitals and similar establishments were filled and 4,400 in the school meals services. These figures represent intake; they do not represent net increase in staffs.

The Minister of Labour and National Service also announced in November 1943 that his aim was to place domestic employment in hospitals and allied services in the general estimation on a footing with any other industry, and that it should offer suitable training, prospects of advancement and proper welfare arrangements.<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, he appointed a small Standing Advisory Committee on Institutional Domestic Employment to advise him on the further steps which should be taken from time to time in this and kindred matters; and so far as welfare was concerned, he asked the Factory and Welfare Advisory Board, which already advised him on all matters affecting the welfare of industrial workers, to extend their scope and their membership so as to include welfare for domestic workers in institutions.

### *Welfare of Domestic Workers*

In accordance with advice received from the Factory and Welfare Advisory Board, welfare officers have been instructed to pay special attention to the following, among other matters, when dealing with the welfare of domestic workers:

Reasonable time off, planned in advance so that workers are able to make and keep arrangements;

Satisfactory canteen arrangements and satisfactory working and sleeping quarters;

So far as outlying institutions are concerned, entertainment facilities and "amenity" transport.<sup>2</sup>

### *Training for Domestic Employment*<sup>3</sup>

During the war, the demand for women cooks for large-scale cooking, particularly in factories, canteens, war workers' hostels, school meals centres, and British Restaurants, increased to such an extent that a training scheme was started to train women for the work. Instruction was given in technical colleges combined with practical tuition in working canteens. In areas where the demands were mainly for hospital work the training was adjusted accordingly. For women who had had experience in large-scale cooking, courses in the management of large-scale catering establishments were instituted.

<sup>1</sup> *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, 4 Nov. 1943, cols. 868-871.

<sup>2</sup> *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, Feb. 1944, p. 21.

<sup>3</sup> See also p. 42.

On the recommendation of the Standing Advisory Committee on Institutional Domestic Employment, a training scheme was also established for training for domestic work in hospitals and similar institutions under which short courses of free training in the duties of housemaids, ward maids, diningroom maids and kitchen maids were provided.

In addition to these schemes, the question of providing a comprehensive system of training for domestic employment was being considered in connection with post-war training schemes.<sup>1</sup>

#### CATERING INDUSTRY

In addition to the school meals service, already mentioned, catering establishments fall into two main categories, those serving war workers and servicemen and women and those serving the public.

##### *Catering Arrangements for War Workers and Servicemen and Women*

These arrangements included the provision of hostels and canteens for industrial workers and hostels, clubs and canteens for servicemen and women run by voluntary organisations.

During the war there was a great expansion in the provision of these services. The need for hostels for war workers was so urgent and vital that the National Service Hostels Corporation was set up to provide and to accept the responsibility for running a considerable number of the additional hostels which were necessary, while a number of hostels were also set up under the responsibility of the Ministry of Supply; their management was undertaken on behalf of the Ministry by certain voluntary organisations.<sup>2</sup> Domestic employment in these services was regarded during the war as vital war work and steps were taken to maintain women in the employment and to induce them to take up the work as their form of national service.

##### *Catering Establishments for the Public*

These include hotels, restaurants (including British Restaurants) cafés, and clubs for civilians.

The work in establishments of these kinds was not regarded as vital war work for women registered under the Registration for Employment Orders who were available for transfer to war work. The position as regards existing staff was, however, safeguarded to a large extent by a special arrangement regarding the withdrawal of women within the registered age groups. Provision was made when necessary for consultation with the Divisional Food Officer.

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<sup>1</sup> *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, 20 Jan. 1944, col. 371.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 94.



*Catering Wages Act.*

Apart from questions relating to labour supply and demand in the catering industry during wartime, there was a major development in the industry in the passing of the Catering Wages Act, 1943, which among other matters made provision for the establishment of Wages Boards to regulate the remuneration and conditions of employment of catering workers. The full effect of the operation of this Act will probably not become evident until after the war, but in view of the large number of women employed in the industry<sup>1</sup> the main provisions of the Act and the progress made up to the end of 1944 are described below.

<sup>1</sup> Information on numbers of male and female workers in the main branches of the catering industries is given in the Second Annual Report of the Catering Wages Commission. The following statistical data (from MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND NATIONAL SERVICE, Catering Wages Commission: *Second Annual Report, 1944-1945* (H.M. Stationery Office, London, Aug. 1945), Appendix I) are admittedly estimates but they give useful indications on the extent of women's employment in the industry and on their relative importance.

CATERING INDUSTRY: ESTIMATED NUMBERS OF WORKERS, BY SEX,  
FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME WORKERS

Type of establishment <sup>1</sup>	Number of establishments	Number of workers				Total
		Male		Female		
		Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	
Unlicensed non-residential (including cafés, tea-shops, milk bars, snack bars, unlicensed restaurants, etc.).....	63,015	20,282	7,784	145,457	70,956	244,479
Licensed residential and licensed restaurants (including licensed residential clubs and hotels and railway station buffets or refreshment rooms)...	8,057	27,082	4,181	48,655	15,497	95,415
Licensed non-residential (including public houses and registered clubs)....	75,000 <sup>2</sup>	28,880	19,420	59,010 <sup>3</sup>	57,290	164,600
Unlicensed residential (including unlicensed hotels, boarding houses and hostels) <sup>4</sup> .....	76,000	15,800	2,700	60,900	20,600	100,000
Industrial and staff canteens <sup>5</sup> .....	23,800	12,595	2,784	112,961	27,060	155,400
Total.....	245,872	104,639	36,869	426,983	191,403	759,894

<sup>1</sup> Based on the groupings adopted for wages board purposes.

<sup>2</sup> The estimate of the number of establishments is based on the Report of the Commissioners of Custom and Excise for 1939.

<sup>3</sup> The estimated numbers of workers in licensed non-residential establishments are based on statistics relating to 13,649 establishments of this type.

<sup>4</sup> Wages board recommended, but no order made so far. The figures are very rough estimates.

<sup>5</sup> Based on Ministry of Labour and National Service list of employers as at 1 May 1945. The estimates of the total number of workers and of the number in the various classes are based on statistics relating to 20,965 establishments of this type.

The Catering Wages Act contains provision for the establishment of a Catering Wages Commission which is "empowered to review existing arrangements for regulating the remuneration and conditions of employment of workers in the hotel and catering industry, and to make enquiries into matters affecting the remuneration, conditions of employment, health and welfare of those workers".

Where the Commission is of the opinion that machinery for regulating the remuneration and conditions of employment of any workers to whom the Act applies does not exist, or is not and cannot be made adequate, the Commission may recommend to the Minister the establishment of a wages board, which will have power to submit proposals to the Minister for fixing the remuneration to be paid by employers to the workers concerned, for fixing intervals for meals or rest, and for requiring workers to be allowed holidays with pay. The Catering Wages Commission was established by the Minister of Labour and National Service in July 1943.

#### PRIVATE DOMESTIC EMPLOYMENT

One of the effects of the need for women for war work and other forms of national service was to reduce the number of women in private domestic employment. Domestic workers were withdrawn from households with more than the minimum help necessary, but certain measures were instituted to safeguard the position of private employers to whom domestic help was essential. Women continued, however, to leave private domestic employment for the services, Land Army and factory work, and eventually the drain on private domestic work became so severe that it was necessary to take steps to supply domestic workers to limited classes of private households which were in special difficulty owing to the lack of essential domestic help.

Examples of the kind of private households recognised as needing domestic help were certain doctors' and farmers' households and households where there were expectant or nursing mothers and young children, invalids or infirm persons, or large numbers of war workers. Domestic employment in households of these kinds was recognised in January 1944 to be a form of national service and suitable women were encouraged to take such work. In difficult cases, women's panels determined whether a household was one to which a worker might properly be asked to go as her work of national importance. In cases of extreme difficulty a high priority was given to the work.

As a result of the measures taken, approximately 18,800 vacancies in domestic employment in hardship households were filled during 1944.

### *"Home Helps" Schemes*

The hardship arising in private households owing to lack of domestic help, particularly during periods of sickness, childbirth or other emergency, became an acute problem when full mobilisation took place, and when, as a result, relations and friends who would in normal times have been available to give such domestic help were themselves working. Local authorities already had powers in connection with their maternity and child welfare arrangements to provide for the supply of "home helps" in maternity cases or when a mother with children under five was ill. In order to meet the need for temporary help in other cases of sickness and emergency, their powers were extended by a Defence Regulation<sup>1</sup> in November 1944, so that, in addition to the cases falling under the maternity and child welfare arrangements, "home helps" could be supplied during sickness or emergency to households—

- (1) where the housewife fell sick or must have an operation;
- (2) where the wife was suddenly called away to her husband in hospital and arrangements had to be made to look after the children;
- (3) with elderly people who were infirm or one of whom suddenly fell ill;
- (4) where several members were ill at the same time, e.g., during an influenza epidemic.

The scheme was to be as flexible as possible and the fullest use was to be made of part-time workers.

"Home helps" were employed and paid by the local authority and the local authority recovered all or part of the cost from the household in so far as the resources of the household permitted. Local authorities were required to ensure that cases were properly sponsored, either by officials of the health services or by voluntary organisations of standing.

It was recognised that the women who acted as "home helps" were doing an important piece of social service and in order to supply the number of women wanted by the local authorities to run their schemes, a high priority was given to the recruitment of suitable women.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Statutory Rules and Orders, 1944, No. 1313, 23 Nov. 1944.

<sup>2</sup> *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, Jan. 1945, p. 6.

*Reorganisation of Private Domestic Work*

During the last two years, many suggestions were received from persons and organisations interested in the post-war organisation of private domestic employment, and as it was obvious that there was a considerable amount of public interest in the matter, the Minister of Labour and National Service asked Miss Violet Markham, C.H., LL.D., D.Litt., J.P., and Miss Florence Hancock, O.B.E., to examine the schemes which had been put forward, to interview persons and organisations interested, and to furnish a report.<sup>1</sup> Their report has been received and is now under consideration by the various Government departments concerned.<sup>2</sup> It was published as a Command Paper in June 1945.<sup>3</sup> A plan is proposed in the report with a view to raising the status of domestic workers and rendering domestic work more attractive, so that finally this form of employment would become what it should be: "an entirely honourable and self-respecting occupation for any woman and an occupation which fulfils an essential service to the community". Rejecting the establishment of a statutory minimum rate in the industry on account of psychological factors and also in view of the difficulties of enforcing such provisions, the authors of the report approached the problem from a broader angle, that of organisation of the industry. They recommended the institution of a corporation for domestic workers to be known as the "National Institute of Houseworkers" and to be established on the lines of the National Service Hostels Corporation Ltd.; it would accordingly be sponsored by the Government, but it would have its own directorate and be operated under independent management.

The two main aims of the Institute would be: (1) to supply competent domestic workers; and (2) to adopt regulations for minimum rates of wages and conditions to which employers of the Institute's certified workers must conform. All the work of this Institute—except training—should ultimately be self-supporting.<sup>4</sup>

Training should be provided by the Institute pending the establishment of new *ad hoc* facilities under the new Education Act. In the immediate future, civilian women and girls would be trained

<sup>1</sup> *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, 4 May 1944, cols. 1545-1576; 1 Aug. 1944, col. 1195.

<sup>2</sup> *Idem*, 7 Dec. 1944, col. 704.

<sup>3</sup> MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND NATIONAL SERVICE: *Report on Post-War Organisation of Private Domestic Employment* (Cmd. 6650, H.M. Stationery Office, London, June 1945).

<sup>4</sup> It is estimated that this could be achieved through the payment of annual subscriptions from householders, charges to residents in hostels for day workers, and subscriptions from non-resident working members for club facilities. Charges for "supply workers" (part-time workers) would have to be in excess of wages to cover insurance, holiday payments and administrative costs. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 15.

in the Institute's local centres, and receive, where appropriate, maintenance allowances; service women would be trained in readjustment courses before demobilisation. Advanced courses should be provided for members of the Institute who want to take up specialised work such as cooking and housekeeping or to qualify for posts in institutions or in the catering trade. Workers trained in the Institute's centres or whose efficiency is recognised by the Institute's centres would be entitled to a certificate, to be endorsed by the Institute after a qualifying period of employment. Certified houseworkers would be placed in approved households, where the employer would be prepared to observe wages and conditions which are not less favourable than those to be laid down by the Institute. Standard wages and hours should be settled by an independent committee. Personal references should be replaced by a signing-off book.

Three types of houseworkers would be supplied by the Institute: (1) resident workers; (2) regular daily or part-time workers employed by one household, to be employees of the householders; and (3) "supply workers", employed on a four-hour shift system by more than one household: these workers would remain the employees of the Institute.

In order to meet the need for help in households of modest means, it is suggested that, where it could be shown that domestic work is a necessity, it should be brought into line with all wages paid by commercial concerns, that is by allowing wages to be deducted from income before the employer's tax is assessed. The authors of the report estimate that day work, with the greater measure it offers of personal independence, will, in the future, be the general rule.<sup>1</sup> It is suggested that hostels be provided for day workers of various occupations, including houseworkers, these hostels being attached to the training centres, and that clubs could be established in connection with the hostels to form the local headquarters of domestic workers belonging to the Institute.<sup>2</sup>

Other recommendations are that bye-laws for the control and supervision of registry offices should be made compulsory upon all local authorities.

Among the various proposals which have been put forward in respect of private domestic workers, special mention should be

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<sup>1</sup> In order to secure leisure for the housewife, it is suggested that mutual-aid arrangements might be arrived at between neighbours. The British Red Cross Society, consulted on this aspect of the question, was giving sympathetic consideration to the setting up of machinery which would meet this need. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 18-19.

<sup>2</sup> The Government has recently announced the establishment, on a limited experimental basis, of a National Institute of Houseworkers, as recommended in the report (*Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, 7 Feb. 1946, col. 1893).

made of the comprehensive report presented at the 76th Annual Conference of the Trades Union Congress in October 1944; this report was prepared for consideration by the Ministry of Labour.<sup>1</sup> It is proposed in the report that a National Advisory Committee be established, consisting of representatives of workers and employers and of the Ministry of Labour, in order to consider the post-war position of the domestic worker. This report deals with domestic service in general; in view, however, of the measures already taken or planned for other branches of domestic service, special emphasis has been laid on the questions affecting domestic workers employed in private houses. An adequate system of vocational training should be organised and based on a uniform standard throughout the country, designed (a) for students leaving school, and (b) for those above school-leaving age who need either a refresher course or complete training; courses for specialised domestic work should also be arranged. The successful completion of the course of training would automatically imply registration as a trained domestic worker. Vacancies in domestic employment should be dealt with by specialised departments set up in the Ministry of Labour employment exchanges. Principles for two systems of engagement are put forward covering (a) the contract of engagement of "free lance" domestic workers with their employers, and (b) the employment of certificated domestic workers by the State or through each local authority under a "home helps" service; the latter system is strongly advocated. Precise standards of employment concerning, among other matters, hours of duty, holidays, uniforms, and living accommodation have also been proposed. It is suggested that rates of pay and conditions of work be established by legislation or recommendations by the responsible Ministry. This question, however, is controversial. For example, it was suggested in the Report of the Organisation of Women Committee, presented to the 17th Annual Conference of Unions enrolling Women Workers of Scotland, that wages and hours should not be fixed by legislation, and that such matters would be more appropriately dealt with by the establishment of a national corporation which would presumably establish representative advisory bodies and work through employment exchanges<sup>2</sup>; the recommendations presented in the White Paper analysed above follow almost the same lines.

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<sup>1</sup> TRADES UNION CONGRESS: *General Council's Report to the 76th Annual Congress to be Held at Blackpool, Oct. 16, 1944*, pp. 21-24.

<sup>2</sup> SCOTTISH TRADES UNION CONGRESS, General Council: *Scottish Congress Bulletin*, No. 184, Nov. 1944.

## CHAPTER V

### WOMEN IN THE NURSING PROFESSION

Despite increased recruitment to the nursing and midwifery professions in the last ten years, there was, even in the period immediately preceding the war, a considerable shortage of nurses and midwives to meet all demands. Although recruitment continued to increase markedly, the war naturally accentuated this shortage, because of increased demands for the services of nurses and midwives due to circumstances arising from the war; for example, the requirements of the armed forces, demands for nurses for emergency medical services, for first-aid posts, for industrial nursing and for nurseries—and, in the case of midwives, an increased demand because of the rising birth rate and evacuation.

Although nursing and midwifery are in one sense two distinct professions, it is not possible to deal with them separately, because midwives are recruited to the extent of over 90 per cent. from the ranks of women who have first qualified as State registered nurses, and there is a considerable body of opinion which feels that this should be the only avenue of recruitment to the midwifery profession. This accounts for the fact that apparently a large number of women who qualified in the allied profession of midwifery did not after some time remain practising midwives. Of well over 60,000 women who have qualified as midwives and are on the Midwives' Roll of the Central Midwives' Boards for England and Wales and for Scotland, only something like 16,000 are practising midwives, since many of the State registered nurses, who attain the midwifery qualification, return in due course to more senior posts in the nursing profession.

Various measures have been taken during the war (a) to stimulate recruitment to the nursing profession; (b) to retain in the profession such women as were already employed in it; and (c) to distribute within the profession the women employed in the most useful way possible, having regard to the general national interest.

## STIMULATION OF RECRUITMENT

*Civil Nursing Reserve*

In anticipation of the increased demands due to the war a Civil Nursing Reserve was set up by the Ministry of Health in the early part of 1939. A Civil Nursing Reserve was also set up in Scotland by the Secretary of State. Members of the Reserve consisted of trained nurses, assistant nurses, and nursing auxiliaries. Persons already engaged in essential nursing duties were not eligible for enrolment in the Reserve, and a large proportion of the early members were nurses who left retirement to volunteer for national service. Arrangements were made to give short courses of instruction to persons without nursing training or experience to qualify them to become nursing auxiliaries. The purpose of the Reserve was to assist employing authorities to meet the additional staffing needs occasioned by the war and members were allocated to hospitals, including hospitals for the chronic sick and tuberculosis institutions, and to a lesser extent mental hospitals, the First-Aid Post Service, casualty evacuation trains, wartime nurseries, the district nursing service in reception areas, and elsewhere. Although the conditions of service were prescribed by the Minister of Health, members were actually employed by the authority to whom they were allocated. At first both whole-time and part-time members were freely recruited, but subsequently recruitment was limited for the most part to persons able to offer full-time mobile service. The total numbers of members employed whole time on 31 December 1944 were 3,052 trained nurses, 2,254 assistant nurses and 14,122 nursing auxiliaries. The total number of members employed whole time in Scotland on 31 December 1944 were 1,053 trained nurses, 336 assistant nurses and 3,280 nursing auxiliaries. In Scotland a number of 600-1,200 bedded hutted hospitals were staffed entirely by members of the Reserve. Nursing auxiliaries have been given every encouragement to make nursing their career and not simply their wartime service, and at least 3,000 of them have become student nurses with a view to training for State registration. Others have taken their midwifery training. The Reserve remains in being to help authorities in their continuing difficulties.

*Other Measures: Setting up of a National Advisory Council,  
Registration, Publicity Campaigns*

Other measures for the stimulation of recruitment to the nursing and midwifery professions, apart from the arrangements



for the improvement in salaries and working conditions to which reference is made below, have since 1943 largely been taken on the advice of the National Advisory Council for the Recruitment and Distribution of Nurses and Midwives which, in view of the general shortage and uneven distribution of nurses and midwives then existing, was set up in February 1943 by the Minister of Labour and National Service to advise him on all questions relating to the recruitment and distribution of male and female nurses, and midwives on civilian work.<sup>1</sup> Before that time there were arrangements, including various forms of publicity, for retaining and increasing the numbers of women in the civilian nursing services, and nursing and midwifery were recognised as among the most vital services of the country, but the pressing demands for additional nurses and midwives became more and more insistent as the country became increasingly organised for war.

As a first step the registration of all nurses and midwives in the country was undertaken in April 1943<sup>2</sup> and from then onwards reviews of those who registered have taken place, with the result that a considerable number of men and women with nursing experience have been transferred from non-nursing employment to nursing work in institutions and other vital services. At the same time, various publicity campaigns have been instituted from time to time to attract volunteers to nursing employment both as a career and as a form of national service in wartime. The special priority which was accorded to nursing meant that, with so few exceptions as to be negligible, volunteers in any occupation who wished to become nurses or midwives have been permitted to leave other employment to join the profession.

#### RETENTION OF NURSES ALREADY IN NURSING

From the early days of the war, women in nursing and midwifery were not required to transfer to other forms of national service, but, until 1943, when the Nurses and Midwives Registration for Employment Order was made and the Employment of Women (Control of Engagement) Order was extended to nurses and midwives, they could, if they so desired, leave nursing of their own accord for other kinds of employment. There was, however, one notable exception. In August 1941, nurses employed in mental nursing were required to remain in their employment by an Order made by the Ministry of Health, which covered such nurses with an aggregate of 12 months' service in mental hospitals and engaged

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<sup>1</sup> *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, Feb. 1943, p. 22.

<sup>2</sup> *Idem*, Apr. 1943, p. 49.

in full-time employment in such institutions at not less favourable conditions than those recommended in July 1941 by the Mental Hospitals Joint Conciliation Committee.<sup>1</sup> (In December 1943 the Secretary of State made a similar Order applicable to workers employed in mental hospitals in Scotland.) At about the same time nursing staff, including probationers, were excluded from an arrangement by which women of 20-25 years of age, who were then employed by local authorities, were withdrawn from their employment for vital war work or the women's services.<sup>2</sup> In addition, women engaged in a civil capacity in hospitals and other civil nursing services, although not exempted under statute, were not called up under the National Service Acts, as being already employed in vital war work.<sup>3</sup>

As regards the nursing services of the Crown, women members were statutorily excluded from liability to be called up under the National Service Act, 1941, in the same way as women members of the various auxiliary services of the forces.

#### DISTRIBUTION OF NURSES AND MIDWIVES

The review that was undertaken of nurses and midwives who had registered under the Nurses and Midwives Registration for Employment Order, 1943, dated 30 March 1943<sup>4</sup>, resulted, not only in bringing back into nursing employment many of those who had left it in earlier years, but also enabled the transfer of nurses from less essential to more essential nursing work to be made. This process was facilitated in September 1943 by the extension, with certain exceptions, of the Employment of Women (Control of Engagement) Order to nurses and midwives between the ages of 18 and 40 years.<sup>5</sup> From then on, nurses and midwives have, in general, been obliged to obtain employment through a local office of the Ministry of Labour and National Service and employers have been required to engage them through these offices. This change was made to give the Ministry of Labour and National Service the control over the distribution of trained and untrained nurses which was needed to carry out the plans for improving the distribution of nurses and midwives to those fields which were of primary importance in the national interest. This distribution

<sup>1</sup> Mental Nurses (Employment and Offences) Order, 1941 (Statutory Rules and Orders, 1941, No. 1294), in *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, Nov. 1941, p. 230.

<sup>2</sup> *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, Dec. 1941, p. 233.

<sup>3</sup> *Idem*, Jan. 1942, p. 6.

<sup>4</sup> *Idem*, Apr. 1943, p. 49.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND NATIONAL SERVICE: *The Employment of Women (Control of Engagement) Orders, 1943—How the Orders Affect Nurses and Midwives*.

of nurses and midwives has been carried out in accordance with general priorities recommended by the National Advisory Council for the Recruitment and Distribution of Nurses and Midwives.

A further measure, the purpose of which was to improve the distribution of nurses and midwives, was instituted on the advice of the National Advisory Council. Under it all nurses after admission to the General State Register were held to be available for allocation to further training or employment up to a period of a year in one of the fields of nursing work experiencing special shortage, provided their training hospital was not held to require their services for a period having regard to its own staffing position and any special features it possessed. Newly qualified midwives were required also to give a year of service in midwifery work before transferring, if they so desired, to other nursing work.

#### IMPROVEMENT OF SALARIES AND WORKING CONDITIONS

Improvement of the conditions of service in nursing occupations was also considered as a means of alleviating the acute shortage of nurses. In accordance with a recommendation of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Nursing Services made in 1938, the Minister of Health set up in November 1941 a national committee, consisting of representatives of nurses and their employers in equal numbers, under the independent chairmanship of Lord Rushcliffe, to draw up agreed scales of salaries and emoluments and related conditions of service for nurses employed in hospitals and the public health services in England and Wales. A similar committee, under the chairmanship of Professor T. M. Taylor, was set up at the same time by the Secretary of State for Scotland.

The Nurses' Salaries Committee for England and Wales submitted a first report in February 1943<sup>1</sup>, on salaries and emoluments of female nurses in general hospitals, public assistance institutions, children's hospitals, infectious diseases hospitals, sanatoria, tuberculosis hospitals and other specialised hospitals except mental hospitals; male nurses employed in such institutions were covered some months later by a second report<sup>2</sup>, which also dealt with nurses in the public health services, district nurses and nurseries. The salaries and other conditions of service in mental hospitals in England and Wales were the subject of a report prepared by a subcommittee appointed in association with the Nurses'

<sup>1</sup> *First Report of Nurses' Salaries Committee—Salaries and Emoluments of Female Nurses in Hospitals* (Cmd. 6424, H.M. Stationery Office, London, Feb. 1943); *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, Mar. 1943, p. 37.

<sup>2</sup> *Second Report of Nurses' Salaries Committee* (Cmd. 6487, H.M. Stationery Office, London, Dec. 1943); *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, Dec. 1943, p. 167.

Salaries Committee, submitted in 1944.<sup>1</sup> Its proposals have been endorsed by the Nurses' Salaries Committee.

The Nurses' Salaries Committee for Scotland submitted in February 1943 an interim report<sup>2</sup> which was followed in April 1943 by a second report<sup>3</sup> and in March 1944 by a third report<sup>4</sup> covering the whole field of reference and reproducing in an amended and expanded form the recommendations of the interim report concerning salaries and working conditions.

Midwives' rates of pay and conditions of service, which the Scottish Nurses' Salaries Committee dealt with at the same time as nurses' conditions, were studied in England and Wales by a special committee, the Midwives' Salaries Committee, appointed by the Minister of Health in May 1942, six months after the appointment of the Nurses' Salaries Committee. It worked under the chairmanship of Lord Rushcliffe in close collaboration with the Nurses' Salaries Committee and issued its report in July 1943.<sup>5</sup> This report deals with midwives employed in hospitals and maternity homes, those in the domiciliary service, non-medical supervisors, and pupil midwives. All the recommendations are intended to be standard national recommendations, and departures from them are deprecated both by the Committee and by the Health Ministers.

Both the Minister of Health and the Secretary of State for Scotland have, in view of the importance of this matter, commended the proposals of the Salaries Committees to the employing authorities concerned and have undertaken, pending the settlement of the post-war health services, to meet half the additional expenditure involved in their adoption, provided that they are adopted in their entirety. The proposals have in fact been generally adopted.

### *Scales of Salaries and Emoluments*<sup>6</sup>

The recommended scales were set out in detail in the reports and here it is possible to quote only a few. For England and Wales

<sup>1</sup> MINISTRY OF HEALTH: *Nurses' Salaries Committee—Report of the Mental Nurses Sub-Committee* (Cmd. 6542, H.M. Stationery Office, London, 1944); *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, Aug. 1944, p. 123.

<sup>2</sup> *Interim Report of Scottish Nurses' Salaries Committee* (Cmd. 6425, H.M. Stationery Office, London, Feb. 1943); *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, Mar. 1943, p. 37.

<sup>3</sup> *Second Report of Scottish Nurses' Salaries Committee* (Cmd. 6439, H.M. Stationery Office, London, Apr. 1943); *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, May 1943, pp. 64-65.

<sup>4</sup> *Third Report of the Scottish Nurses' Salaries Committee* (Cmd. 6505, H.M. Stationery Office, London, Mar. 1944).

<sup>5</sup> MINISTRY OF HEALTH: *Report of Midwives' Salaries Committee—Salaries and Emoluments of Institutional and Domiciliary Midwives, Non-Medical Supervisors of Midwives and Pupil Midwives* (Cmd. 6460, H.M. Stationery Office, London 1943).

<sup>6</sup> The scales of salaries were raised in January 1946.

the annual salary proposed for female staff nurses was £100 (or £90 for those registered as fever nurses only), rising by annual increments of £5 to £140. The salary recommended for staff nurses in Scotland was £100, rising by annual increments of £10 to £120 a year. The total annual value of emoluments (*i.e.*, board, lodging, personal laundry and the use and laundering of uniform) for staff nurses was assessed at £90 by both Committees. In the case of non-resident staff nurses in England and Wales, the emoluments were divided into a living-out allowance of £65 a year, which was added to the cash payment made to the nurse, and a sum of £25 as the value of the meals on duty and the use and laundering of uniforms provided by the hospital for non-resident nurses.

Owing to the difficulty of staffing tuberculosis hospitals and sanatoria, both reports proposed that salary rates for the junior grades in these institutions should be £10 a year higher.

As to nurses in mental hospitals, the Mental Nurses Sub-Committee appointed in association with the Nurses' Salaries Committee, keeping in mind the difficulties and the less congenial nature of the work, considered justifiable the payment to certain grades of higher rates of salaries. The scale recommended for female staff nurses began at £120 a year and rose by annual increments of £5 to £160 a year; the annual value of emoluments provided for resident staff nurses was assessed at £90, as in the case of staff nurses in other hospitals. An additional payment of £10 a year was payable to staff nurses who, in addition to being qualified mental nurses, were general State registered nurses.<sup>1</sup> Similar rates were recommended by the Mental Nurses Sub-Committee of the Scottish Nurses' Salaries Committee.<sup>2</sup>

For staff midwives employed in hospitals or maternity homes who are not also general State registered nurses, the salary recommended by the Midwives' Salaries Committee was £100, rising by annual increments of £5 to £150; the total annual value of residential emoluments was assessed at £90. As regards domiciliary midwives who are provided with full emoluments in hospitals or homes, the standard salary was £120 a year rising by annual increments of £10 to £190; for district midwives who are not also general State registered nurses and for village nurse midwives, £110, rising by increments of £10 to £170.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> MINISTRY OF HEALTH: *Nurses' Salaries Committee—Report of the Mental Nurses Sub-Committee*, *op. cit.*; *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, Aug. 1944, p. 123.

<sup>2</sup> DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH FOR SCOTLAND, Scottish Nurses' Salaries Committee: *Fourth Report (Mental Nurses)* (Cmd. 6684, H.M. Stationery Office, Edinburgh, 1945).

<sup>3</sup> *Report of Midwives' Salaries Committee*, *op. cit.*; *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, Aug. 1943, p. 113.

*Hours of Service and Other Conditions*

The reports advised the national application of a 96-hour fortnight (day or night) for the general body of hospital nurses (except those in supervisory positions), on a date to be determined by the Minister of Health as soon as circumstances permit; these hours included lectures and tutorial classes in the case of student nurses.<sup>1</sup> It was recommended that all grades of nurses, including student nurses, should have one full day off duty a week and an annual holiday of 28 days with pay; scales of sick pay were also proposed. The Nurses' Salaries Committee for England and Wales also recommended that hospital authorities should discontinue the practice of charging fees to student nurses (this also applies in Scotland) and that the Minister of Health should make a grant to enable nurses to train for qualification as sister tutors.

The recommendations of the Nurses' Salaries Committee on hours of service were accepted for mental nurses by the Mental Nurses Sub-Committee, which strongly deprecated the working of hours in excess of 96 a fortnight and considered that every endeavour should be made by employing authorities to keep working hours within that limit, giving additional off-duty time to make up for working excess hours; work in excess of a total of 108 hours in a fortnight should be remunerated by an additional payment in the case of a mental nurse in a grade up to and including the grades of ward sister or charge nurse.<sup>2</sup>

A working fortnight of 96 hours was also recommended by the Midwives' Salaries Committee for institutional midwives (other than those in a supervisory position) and for pupil midwives; as regards domiciliary midwives, it was recognised that a rigid limit could not be applied to their working day, but the Committee recommended the adoption of arrangements by which the midwives would be given, in three weeks out of four, at least two consecutive nights and the intervening day off duty a week and, in the fourth week, a long weekend of 60 hours' consecutive free time. All grades of midwives should have 28 days' annual leave with pay. Scales of sick pay were also recommended.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Answering a question in the House of Commons on 22 July 1943, the Minister of Health said that the date on which the 96-hour fortnight would be nationally operated had to be determined by him but, at the time, he could not say that the supply of nurses was sufficient to enable the 96-hour fortnight to be worked in all hospitals; that the Athlone Inter-Departmental Committee, to whose Interim Report recommendations of 1938 the Rushcliffe Committee drew attention, had interpreted the 96-hour fortnight as being exclusive of time spent at meals (*Parliamentary Debates, Houses of Commons*, 22 July 1943, col. 1088).

<sup>2</sup> *Report of the Mental Nurses Sub-Committee, op. cit.*

<sup>3</sup> *Report of the Midwives' Salaries Committee, op. cit.*; Ministry of Labour Gazette, Aug. 1943, p. 113.

## THE FUTURE

It is clear that the end of the war has not led to a reduction in the demand for nurses. On the contrary, when the proposed National Health Service is brought fully into operation, the demand is likely to be greater than ever before. Various suggestions have been put forward about methods of maintaining and stimulating recruitment to the profession, including proposals put forward by an unofficial committee set up under the Royal College of Nursing, under the chairmanship of Lord Horder, and entitled the Nursing Reconstruction Committee. The report of this Committee dealt with the education and training of nurses as well as with recruitment.<sup>1</sup>

*State Registered Nurses*

There is general agreement on the importance of maintaining a high standard of training for State registration. The possibility of revising the basic training for student nurses is being widely discussed, but no final decisions have yet been taken. The future training of assistant nurses, which will be largely of a simple and practical nature, is, as indicated below, also under consideration.

*Assistant Nurses*

Assistant nurses form a considerable proportion of the staff employed in hospitals, particularly municipal hospitals. In Scotland, assistant nurses are employed in chronic sick and some of the smaller infectious diseases hospitals and cottage hospitals, but not in any large numbers. These nurses are recruited from persons who, while they may make competent practical nurses, would not be able to pass the examination necessary for State registration. The Nurses Act, 1943 (which for the most part implemented recommendations made by the Inter-Departmental Committee on Nursing Services at the end of 1938) and the Nurses (Scotland) Act, 1943, which followed the same lines as the English measure, made provision, for the first time, for a statutory qualification for this category of nurse, empowering the General Nursing Councils for England and Wales and for Scotland to make rules, subject to the approval of the Minister of Health and the Secretary of State for Scotland respectively, for establishing a Roll of Assistant Nurses. Rules were made and approved governing the admission to the Roll of existing assistant nurses, *i.e.*, those with suitable

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<sup>1</sup> ROYAL COLLEGE OF NURSING: *Nursing Reconstruction Committee Report* (H.M. Stationery Office, London, Dec. 1943), Section II, "Education and Training", and Section III, "Recruitment".

training or experience before the passing of the Act, and "intermediate" assistant nurses, *i.e.*, those (other than existing assistant nurses) who trained or acquired experience before the date on which rules relative to the future training of assistant nurses came into operation.<sup>1</sup> The absence hitherto of a recognised qualification for assistant nurses had inevitably been a hindrance to their recruitment during wartime, but a number of local authorities on their own initiative inaugurated valuable courses of training, lasting two years.

### *Use of the Title "Nurse"*

The Nurses Act, 1943, and the Nurses (Scotland) Act, 1943, referred to in the previous paragraphs, also included certain provisions designed primarily in the interests of the public. One is a provision that, from a date to be announced by the Minister of Health (the Secretary of State in Scotland) it will be an offence (subject to the exceptions mentioned below) for a person who is not a State registered nurse or an enrolled assistant nurse to use the title "nurse" either alone or in conjunction with other words or letters. A specific exception is made in favour of children's nurses and the Minister of Health (Secretary of State in Scotland) is also empowered to make regulations authorising other classes of persons to use expressions containing the title. These provisions took effect on 15 October 1945, and the general public now knows that a person using the title "nurse" possesses a recognised nursing qualification.<sup>2</sup>

### *Licensing of Agencies for Supply of Nurses*

Another provision establishes the licensing by local authorities of agencies for the supply of nurses (nurses' co-operation) and specifies the types of nurses whom they may supply. This part of the Act came into force in October 1945.<sup>3</sup>

### *Salaries and Conditions*

The Salaries Committees remain in being to interpret their recommendations and review them in the light of experience. As

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<sup>1</sup> These came into force on 9 November 1945; cf. the Nurses (No. 2) Regulations, 1945, Statutory Rules and Orders, 1945, No. 1436, and the Nurses (Scotland) (No. 2) Regulations, 1945, No. 1439/S. 56.

<sup>2</sup> The Nurses Regulations, 1945, Statutory Rules and Orders, 1945, No. 638.

<sup>3</sup> The Nurses Act, 1943 (Commencement) Order, 1945, Statutory Rules and Orders, 1945, No. 637; the Nurses (Scotland) Act, 1943 (Commencement) Order, 1945, No. 652/S. 24.



regards conditions of service not covered by the recommendations of the Committees, war, with its demands on labour and materials, has prevented certain improvements, particularly those requiring building, which in peacetime would have been made. As the difficulties grow less, it will be possible, where necessary, to make the living conditions more attractive and thereby reduce what must necessarily be an obstacle to recruitment.

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## CHAPTER VI

### WOMEN IN THE TEACHING PROFESSION

#### WARTIME DEVELOPMENTS

##### *Employment Figures*

The statistics for the decade preceding the war show that during the period 1929-1934 the total number of full-time teachers in elementary schools increased from 167,306 to 170,908. The total number of women teachers included in these figures showed a decline from 124,564 to 123,848, but the decrease was accounted for by a reduction in the number of uncertificated and supplementary women teachers from 37,699 to 32,680. The number of women certificated teachers actually increased during that period from 84,052 to 87,675. The increases mentioned above accompanied a rise in the elementary school population from 4,956,518 pupils, in average attendance, to 5,121,195. The number of teachers per 1,000 pupils in average attendance showed a reduction from 34.1 to 33.7.

Between 1934 and 1938 the elementary school population declined to 4,582,007 pupils in average attendance and for a time there was an actual oversupply of teachers and some unemployment. Steps were taken to control the number of students entering training colleges and many local education authorities discontinued the employment of married women. The total number of teachers in elementary schools dropped from 170,908 to 166,674, of whom 117,987 were women. Again, the reduction was mainly due to a fall in the number of uncertificated and supplementary women teachers from 32,680 to 27,598. The number of women certificated teachers decreased by about 600, while the number of men certificated teachers rose by nearly 2,000, as the demand for men teachers in the reorganised senior schools increased, and more boys voluntarily remained at school after the age of 14.

During the war years a shortage of personnel was felt in the teaching profession, as in other fields of employment. Recruitment of men teachers especially suffered; the restrictive conditions of

reservation for men students entering training colleges and university training departments resulted in a drop in the intake of men students from about 2,000 per year to about 500 and, on completing their courses, men students were drafted straight into the forces. The number of women entrants, despite somewhat restrictive conditions of reservation, was fairly well maintained; there was generally a surplus of applicants for admission to the colleges, but the accommodation available was reduced by the necessity of evacuating colleges which lay in dangerous areas.

Of the teachers already in teaching service, some 20,000 men were called into the forces. So far as women teachers were concerned, the teaching profession was recognised as being of national importance and women teachers were not, therefore, called up for the auxiliary or civil defence services or directed into industry. They were able to volunteer for women's auxiliary services, etc., but local education authorities were given the opportunity of making representations to the Ministry of Labour against their acceptance; consequently not very many women did in fact leave the profession to enter these services.

The total number of teachers in service in November 1944 was 146,635. With a further fall to 4,519,835 in the population of elementary schools, this gives an average of 32.4 teachers per 1,000 pupils. Of this total of teachers 119,517 were women, *i.e.*, an actual increase of 1,530 in the number of women employed as compared with 1938. Of these, however, some 5,000 were women who remained in service beyond the optional retiring age of 60 and a further 31,387 were married women (excluding widows) under 60.

### *Remuneration*

Until April 1945 the arrangements regarding the payment of salaries to teachers in schools in which local education authorities take responsibility for salary scales continued to be those prescribed in 1938 in the Burnham Committees' Reports for public elementary schools, secondary schools and technical and art schools.<sup>1</sup> These scales of salaries were fixed according to the sex of the teacher and varied according to the grades of the schools. In public elementary schools, for instance, annual rates were as follows<sup>2</sup>:

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<sup>1</sup> The Burnham Committees were set up in 1919 as joint committees fixing by agreements the salary scales for teachers in elementary, secondary and technical and art schools.

<sup>2</sup> BOARD OF EDUCATION: *Fourth Report of the Burnham Committee on Scales of Salaries for Teachers in Public Elementary Schools*, England and Wales, Oct. 1938 (H.M. Stationery Office, London), p. 8.

For uncertificated teachers:

Men	Women
minimum: £102	minimum: £ 93
maximum: £246	maximum: £198

For certificated teachers:

Men	Women
minimum: £168	minimum: £150
maximum: £408	maximum: £324

For certificated head teachers, maximum salaries ranged from £345 to £423 for men, and from £273 to £339 for women teachers.<sup>1</sup>

The same principles had been observed in the fixing of salary scales in secondary schools<sup>2</sup>, and technical and art schools.<sup>3</sup>

Some variations, however, were made during the war in teachers' salaries in the form of war allowances, which were modified several times from November 1940. As from 1 January 1944, these allowances were paid according to the following scales:

	Men	Women
(a) For teachers under 20 years of age.....	£32 per year	£26 per year
(b) For teachers of 20 years of age and over.	£52 " "	£42 " "

In addition, teachers who were evacuated with their school received certain allowances in respect of their continuing liability with home commitments (rent, rates, house insurance, etc.). A married woman teacher was not eligible, however, for such allowances, unless her husband could be regarded as dependent on her.

The conditions of service prescribed in the Burnham Reports were further modified in order to cope with war conditions, particularly in view of the rising cost of living and of the low salaries of teachers, and also of the disturbances caused by the war in the normal course of many teachers' careers. Among the temporary arrangements of this kind which were made, it was decided that, as from 1 April 1944, the basic salary for uncertificated teachers should be increased by one quarter. It was also arranged that war services rendered by persons who worked as teachers before taking up war service, or were training for the profession, should be accounted as equivalent to teaching services for incremental purposes, provided that they resumed or took up teaching services within 12 months of the cessation of their war service. This concession was also extended to persons who took up training courses

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 4 and 7.

<sup>2</sup> BOARD OF EDUCATION: *Third Report of the Burnham Committee on Scales of Salaries for Teachers in Secondary Schools*, England and Wales, July 1938.

<sup>3</sup> BOARD OF EDUCATION: *Third Report of the Burnham Committee on Scales of Salaries for Teachers in Technical and Art Schools*, England and Wales, July 1938.

immediately after their war service and had never been in any profession.<sup>1</sup>

### LONG-RANGE REFORMS AND PLANS

Important reforms which have been made in the educational system will affect the status of women in the teaching profession, as regards an important question: the marriage bar has been removed by statute, since the Education Act, 1944<sup>2</sup>, specifically provides that no woman shall be disqualified for employment or dismissed by reason only of marriage. Before the war, thousands of women teachers had to retire each year from the profession on account of their marriage. Even considered from the strictly utilitarian point of view, this source of qualified personnel cannot be dispensed with, as was pointed out by the McNair Committee in its report on recruitment and training of teachers.<sup>3</sup> Under the pressure of war circumstances, a different attitude was taken by many local education authorities, which were forced to make a large-scale use of married women teachers. It was estimated in 1944 that the proportion of married women employed in elementary schools by local education authorities was as high as 45 per cent.<sup>4</sup>

The question of equal pay for equal work was discussed in Parliament during the debates on the Education Act, when an amendment to the Bill, which would have established an equal pay scale for men and women teachers, was adopted by 117 to 116 votes. A vote of confidence in the Government, however, was passed on the matter the next day and the amendment was then defeated by 425 to 23 votes.<sup>5</sup> This question comes within the scope of the Royal Commission on Equal Pay, which will deal with it in its report.<sup>6</sup>

One of the most difficult problems arising from the reform of the educational system, in particular the raising of the school-leaving age to 15 and eventually to 16 years, is the lack of teaching personnel. The raising of the school-leaving age to 15 years was postponed, partly on account of this difficulty.<sup>7</sup> The Minister of Education has estimated that about 70,000 extra teachers are

<sup>1</sup> Information communicated by the Ministry of Labour and National Service.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. "Educational Reconstruction in Great Britain", in *International Labour Review*, Vol. L, No. 4, Oct. 1944, pp. 481-492.

<sup>3</sup> BOARD OF EDUCATION: *Teachers and Youth Leaders* (H. M. Stationery Office, London, 1944).

<sup>4</sup> NUFFIELD COLLEGE: *The Teaching Profession To-day and To-morrow* (Oxford University Press, May 1944).

<sup>5</sup> *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, 28 Mar. 1944, cols.1330-1335; 30 Mar. 1944, col. 1654.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. pp. 72-3.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. *Educational Reconstruction in Great Britain*, loc. cit.

required in the next few years (in addition to those provided by the normal sources of recruitment) to make good the loss of recruits to the profession during the war, and to provide for reforms such as raising the school-leaving age to 15, reducing the size of classes, and so on.

As a step towards meeting this need, the Ministry has inaugurated an emergency training scheme which recruits men and women (aged 21 to 35) released from the armed forces and from other forms of national service, and gives them an intensive course of training lasting a year. At the end of this they are recognised as qualified teachers, subject to a probationary period of two years.

The Ministry expects to establish up to 50 emergency training colleges with a total output of about 10,000 teachers a year.

It is not yet possible to say what the actual numbers will be, or what proportion of the total will be women.

A committee was appointed by the President of the Board of Education in March 1942, under the chairmanship of Sir Arnold McNair, to study the question of the supply, recruitment and training of teachers. It published its report in May 1944.<sup>1</sup>

This Committee strongly advocated the continued employment of married women teachers (provision for which is already embodied in the Education Act, 1944, as has been seen) and recommended that arrangements be made, particularly as regards motherhood, to meet the needs of married women who desire to remain in or return to the schools, including refresher courses for those returning to school after a prolonged period of absence.

Recruitment for the teaching profession from wider sources was recommended by the Committee. Among the categories of persons which could provide a considerable number of recruits, the Committee included persons of mature age who have been engaged in other occupations; these persons should be encouraged to take up teaching, and adequate maintenance allowances should be granted to suitable men and women who desire to be admitted to the profession. Use of part-time services of qualified persons should also be encouraged in as much as it is advantageous to do so.

The question of salaries for teachers has always been a vexed one, and accounts for the little attraction that the profession had even before the war. As already seen, the salary rates are low. This fact was outspokenly recognised by the McNair Committee, which put forward some basic principles which should govern the fixing of salary scales for teachers; it was recommended that the salaries of teachers in elementary and secondary schools should be "substantially increased".

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<sup>1</sup> *Teachers and Youth Leaders, op. cit.*

The framing of salary scales for teachers is, however, the responsibility of the Burnham Committees. In view of the reorganisation of the educational system, the President of the Board of Education took steps to replace the three existing Burnham Committees by two committees, one of which will deal with salaries in primary and secondary schools and in county colleges (young people's colleges); the other will deal with the salaries in senior and similar institutions. It was announced in May 1944 by the President of the Board of Education that action had been taken to obtain a review of teachers' salaries.<sup>1</sup> A Burnham Committee has recommended salary scales for teachers in publicly-maintained schools in England and Wales. The revised scales apply uniformly to primary and secondary schools and to all localities, subject to an additional payment for the London area, to be determined by a later Burnham award. The proposals for qualified assistant teachers, for instance, which represented a substantial increase over the previous rates, were as follows:

Men: minimum £300, rising by annual increments of £15 to a maximum of £525.

Women: minimum £270, rising by annual increments of £12 to a maximum of £420.

Salary scales for head teachers are graded according to five categories of schools. For full-time teachers, recognised as such by the Minister of Education, in technical (including commercial) colleges and institutes and in art colleges and schools the new salary scales are the same as those for qualified assistant teachers in primary and secondary schools. These scales, which include various additions to the basic rates for teachers with special qualifications or responsibilities, have been approved by the Minister of Education, and will operate for three years from 1 April 1945.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, 4 May 1944, cols. 1463-1465.

<sup>2</sup> MINISTRY OF EDUCATION: *Report of the Burnham Committee on Scales of Salaries for Teachers in Primary and Secondary Schools*, and *Report of the Burnham Committee on Scales of Salaries for Teachers in Technical Colleges and Institutes, Art Colleges and Schools*, England and Wales (H.M. Stationery Office, London, Aug. 1945).

## CHAPTER VII

### WOMEN IN THE CIVIL SERVICE

The introduction of wartime measures involving rationing, restrictions and controls, and war conditions generally, added greatly to the responsibilities of existing Government departments, and new departments were also created. An ever-increasing demand arose for the services of women for new posts, and to fill vacancies caused by the withdrawal of men for service with the forces, civil defence and war production, and women were recruited for temporary Government service to a greater extent than had hitherto been known.

At the same time the staffs of Government departments were kept continually under review by a Special Committee, and additional staff requirements were subject to special sanction.

As hostilities spread and war production expanded, so also did the need for more and more women in industrial employment and in the services. All possible sources of supply, including the Civil Service, were tapped to provide the necessary workers. Women civil servants were permitted to volunteer for the women's auxiliary services, the nursing services and employment in industry, and volunteers were released by departments as far as was reasonably practicable. Departments were also required to contribute their due quota to both services and war production from women in the younger age groups liable to be called upon under the National Service Acts and Registration for Employment Orders.<sup>1</sup>

Government departments engaged in the main young girls fresh from school, older women and women whose circumstances only permitted of their being employed part time. The increased responsibility of training these new recruits fell chiefly to the lot of women civil servants who had remained with their departments. The newly employed staff was used largely for the simpler operations of sorting and filing and for routine clerical duties.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 20, and also MINISTRY OF INFORMATION: *British Women at War* (Feb. 1944), pp. 34-35.



Normally women civil servants are required to relinquish their appointments on marriage, but during wartime, women who married were permitted to continue in Government service on a temporary basis, and many such women remained with their own departments.

Government departments continued to function with a depleted complement of established staff. Excluding 70,000 on active service, it was estimated that in February 1944 there were only 215,000 established staff, of whom 65,000 were women.<sup>1</sup> By that time there were 467,000 unestablished staff, more than half of whom were women.

An example of the extensive employment of women and the wide range of work undertaken by them in Government service is provided by the General Post Office. While their total number in this service was 64,000 in November 1939, it had risen to 130,000 by November 1943; 19,000 were postwomen, helping to sort and deliver mail; 5,600 were doing mechanical work (fitting and installing telephones, cleaning mail vans in the garage, repairing telegraph and telephone instruments in the machine shops); 29,000 were telephone operators; 35,000 were employed in sorting offices and at public counters; nearly 20,000 were doing administrative, clerical and typing work; 9,000 were employed as sub-postmistresses; 3,600 were cleaners; and 2,000 were girl probationers and messengers.<sup>2</sup>

### POST-WAR PLANS

Questions of particular interest to women have been studied and proposals for post-war Government action have been or will be put forward.

The Government stated its policy regarding recruitment to established posts in the Civil Service and approved the report on this subject made by the National Whitley Council. Under the proposed scheme, regarding non-professional and non-technical classes of the Civil Service, in the system of open competitive examinations for entry the following proportion of vacancies should be reserved for ex-servicemen<sup>3</sup>: administrative, three quarters; executive, two thirds; clerical, one half.

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<sup>1</sup> *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, 8 Feb. 1944, col. 1621; 17 Feb. 1944, col. 366.

<sup>2</sup> *British Women at War, op. cit.*, p. 36.

<sup>3</sup> These proportions are based on the fact that before the war 93 per cent. of the open competition vacancies in the administrative class were filled by men, 7 per cent. by women; 84 per cent. of those in the executive class by men, 16 per cent. by women; 62 per cent. of those in the clerical class by men, 38 per cent. by women.

Ex-servicewomen should have reserved to them, after allowance has been made for the ex-servicemen's guaranteed vacancies, a proportion of the remaining vacancies corresponding to the proportion of ex-servicewomen candidates. Reservation for women would be determined by the proportion of servicewomen coming forward and they would get their numerical share, by way of reservation, of the vacancies other than those reserved for servicemen. The subclerical group to be recruited from these competitions would be wholly female.<sup>1</sup>

The admission of women to the senior branches of the Foreign Service has been the object of a long-standing demand on the part of women and public opinion, and the Government decided in June 1945 to appoint a committee to consider the question. The committee is under the chairmanship of Sir Ernest Gower, and comprises six other members, including four women.<sup>2</sup>

The position of married women in the Civil Service has considerably changed during the war, although this was on a temporary basis. The question is now being reviewed in the light of the war experience. Consultations took place between the two sides of the National Whitley Council, who agreed to appoint a special committee to consider the question.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Recruitment to Established Posts in the Civil Service in the Reconstruction Period*, Statement of Government Policy and Civil Service National Whitley Council Report (Cmd. 6567, H.M. Stationery Office, London, Nov. 1944).

<sup>2</sup> *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, 13 June 1945, col. 1631.

<sup>3</sup> *Idem*, 8 May 1945, col. 1818.

## CHAPTER VIII

### WOMEN'S AUXILIARY SERVICES AND WOMEN IN CIVIL DEFENCE

As in the first war, women engaged in occupations directly connected with specific war activities in the women's auxiliary services, in the civil defence units and in the voluntary associations. The problem in the recent war, however, differed widely from that of the previous war for several moral, social, and economic reasons. (1) Recruitment was not effected merely on a voluntary basis, although the strength of the voluntary organisations was very important. Compulsory service for women was established in the civil defence services (*e.g.*, fire-watching) and to some extent in the auxiliary forces. (2) Women were, in a large proportion, trained, not only for minor and administrative jobs, but also for technical and highly specialised tasks which they carried out skilfully. (3) Hundreds of thousands of women coming from all classes were involved in war services. This will create a wide problem of demobilisation and readjustment of the women to peacetime life not widely different from that concerning men. Many of the women will probably not be able or will not want merely to go back to their pre-war status, since many left a career or a job that they will not always be able to resume; many interrupted their training at the call of duty and, under the prospective economic developments, many who were not in the labour market before the war will have to earn a living.

The women's auxiliary forces now appear a necessary complement of the armed forces. Whether a permanent nucleus of the women's corps will be kept within the frame of the military organisation after the war is a matter of general policy which has not yet been tackled officially. It might, however, be useful to note in this connection the proposals of the Committee on Amenities and Welfare Conditions in the Three Women's Services. This Committee, formed to enquire into and report on these problems and to make recommendations, stated in its Report: "We should like to feel that when their present duties come to an end their services might be forthcoming in another field for which their training and experience make them especially fitted". The Report

mentioned particularly the various tasks of relief and reconstruction which will be necessary throughout Europe in missions concerned with food, clothing, housing and medical assistance.<sup>1</sup>

### WOMEN IN THE AUXILIARY FORCES

In 1936, an organisation of women known as the Emergency Service came into being as a voluntary association, but had the recognition of the War Office and the Air Council. A few veterans of the Women's Auxiliary Services of the first war had formed themselves into groups for providing elementary training in officers' duties "for any women's corps that might be employed on duties other than nursing in a national emergency". During the year 1937-38, 400 potential officers were trained; they formed a basis for the new women's auxiliary services that the Government decided to organise in order to substitute "women for men in non-combatant duties in the fighting services". In September 1938, the War Office created an official women's force for service in the Army and Air Force, namely, the Auxiliary Territorial Service, under the aegis of the Territorial Army Associations. Enrolment of women for duty with the R.A.F. was first undertaken by the A.T.S., but soon the desirability of separate organisations became evident and the Women's Auxiliary Air Force was formed by Royal Warrant in June 1939; at the same time the Admiralty decided to revive the Women's Royal Naval Service of the first war for service with the Navy.<sup>2</sup>

The range of tasks to which members of these services were assigned expanded widely in the course of the war, as is recorded further in this chapter.

A woman director is in charge of each service. These women directors are responsible for all matters concerning the welfare and efficiency of women in their services and co-operate with other service directors in matters related to their respective fields of responsibility; they have not, however, final responsibility, since they are part of the general hierarchy of their respective services and headquarters; in the organisation of the three directorates, there is a marked difference between the relations of the women directors with other directors and the degree of responsibility laid upon them. The system of the three services is also different.

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<sup>1</sup> The *Report of the Committee on Amenities and Welfare Conditions in the Three Women's Services* was presented to Parliament in August 1942 (Cmd. 6384). The appointment of the Committee was announced in the House of Commons on 24 Feb. 1942 by the Prime Minister.

<sup>2</sup> *Report of the Committee on Amenities and Welfare Conditions in the Three Women's Services*, Sec. I.

The A.T.S. organisation is mainly regional and conforms to Army Command areas, subdivided into Army corps and Army districts. The W.A.A.F. is organised on the operational basis of the R.A.F. The W.R.N.S. is based on the shore naval commands.

In the three services, women officers are employed in substitution of male officers on technical or other duties, or act as administrative officers whose chief duties relate mainly to the welfare of women. In some cases, such as the W.A.A.F. working with the R.A.F., or the A.T.S. in mixed anti-aircraft batteries, women form part of the establishment of the unit and the administrative duties are carried out for the whole unit by one set of officers and non-commissioned officers. In others, the auxiliaries are not on the establishment of a unit, but work on a "self-contained" basis, and administrative duties for women are carried out by officers of the A.T.S., while parallel duties are carried out by men.<sup>1</sup>

A shortage of officers was felt in the services in 1942, as recruitment and training of officers could not keep pace with the constant expansion of the three services. In this connection the Committee on Amenities and Welfare in the Three Women's Services recommended: (1) further recruitment from within the ranks and commissioning from the non-commissioned officers; (2) further recruitment of women with specialists' qualifications for emergency commissions (all three services had already a system of registration of women with special qualifications for commissions: for example, the W.A.A.F. system of recruiting specialists for radiolocation, meteorology and intelligence work); (3) further co-operation between the services and the Appointment Offices of the Ministry of Labour and National Service, which already existed for the W.A.A.F. and the A.T.S., for the enrolment of women suitable as officers.<sup>2</sup>

Recruitment was at first on a voluntary basis, but, under the pressure of the demands for auxiliary personnel in order to release soldiers and officers in the armed forces for active duty, it was decided to call up women for the women's auxiliary services under the provisions of the National Service Act (No. 2) of 1941.<sup>3</sup> Early in 1942, it was decided that women liable to be called up for the services would be given an opportunity of opting instead for specified civil defence duties or for specified jobs in industry in high-priority war work. Women who expressed an option for the women's auxiliary services were allocated to whichever service was

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<sup>1</sup> *Report of the Committee on Amenities and Welfare Conditions in the Three Women's Services*, Sec. IV.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Sec. V.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. p. 17.

most in need of recruits.<sup>1</sup> But, whenever possible, their preference for a particular service was respected. In August 1942, however, there was still a critical shortage of recruits in the services, and the Ministry of Labour and National Service decided that women who, on registration, had not expressed a preference either for the auxiliary services or for industry and who were termed "non-optants" would be allocated to the services unless they lived in areas of acute shortage of women workers. The proportion of non-optants was invariably about one third of the women registered and they had been treated in practice, until then, as if they had chosen industrial work. Moreover, existing deferments were shortly to be cancelled, and the deferment of women born in 1920-21 and the first half of 1922 was not to be granted, with the exception of those women employed on productive work in reserved industries or in a few other essential undertakings, and those whose conscription would result in the closing down of a branch of business of national importance in which they were employed. At the same time, women engaged on productive work or in reserved industries were allowed to volunteer for the services with their employers' sanction. In the Minister's opinion, it seemed that it might be necessary to conscript women by successive stages to the highest age group mentioned in the Royal Proclamation of March 1942, namely, women 30 years of age. However, only the 1918-1923 age groups inclusive were called up under the Act. By the autumn of 1943, the situation was reversed; the Minister of Labour and National Service, in a statement in the House of Commons on 29 July 1943, declared that the women's auxiliary services were nearly up to establishment and that recruitment for these services must be reduced to a minimum.<sup>2</sup> War industry was calling out for young mobile women and women were thereafter recruited almost exclusively for war industries, especially for the aircraft industry. Wastage in the strength of the women's services since early 1944 was made good by the restricted volunteering of young recruits available under the age of 19 and by a few specialist entries. At the end of 1944 the age ban on volunteering was removed. At present recruitment is only open in the A.T.S. and W.R.N.S.

Women are recruited for service in the forces either in Great Britain or overseas. Medical examination is a prerequisite for entry into the services. Women are classified into four grades: those in grade 1 and 2 are accepted in the A.T.S. and the W.A.A.F.; but the W.R.N.S. are willing to accept only those in grade 1. In addition there are two medical boards run by the War Office and

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<sup>1</sup> *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, Jan. 1942, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Idem*, Oct. 1942, p. 175; Aug. 1943, p. 109.

the Air Ministry for volunteers for the A.T.S. and the W.A.A.F.; intelligence tests are conducted for the A.T.S. by Army personnel before the medical examination. In all three services uniforms and full equipment are furnished. The rate of pay is about two thirds of that of men in the corresponding rank, except for women doctors in the Royal Army Medical Corps, whose pay equals that of men. Servicewomen are housed in different types of accommodation: billets in private or boarding houses, in requisitioned houses, in married quarters, in station barracks blocks or in hutted camps. All educational facilities available to men in the forces are also open to women.<sup>1</sup>

### *The Auxiliary Territorial Service*

The A.T.S. was formed in September 1938, as part of the Territorial Army Associations; subsequently women enrolled in the A.T.S. were declared to be members of the armed forces of the Crown under the Defence (Women's Forces) Regulations, 1941, and they were therefore eligible for employment on combatant duties, but arrangements were made so that they would not be required to use lethal weapons unless they volunteered to do so. Women between the age of 17½ and 43 years may be enrolled in the services, with veterans of the first war accepted up to the age of 50. Recruitment was originally on a voluntary basis and, at the end of 1943, women were being recruited in that way to the extent of almost 50 per cent. Recruits were given the choice in the selection of their occupations subject to fitness and suitability after training. Direct appointment to officer's rank was abolished in 1941, and officers before appointment are now required to serve in the ranks and pass through a cadet course.

The A.T.S. had ten times more members in the first part of 1942 than at the beginning of the war; at the end of 1943 the number of members exceeded 200,000. In the First World War the corresponding auxiliary service (the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps) counted 57,000 members. At the beginning of its existence, women were employed mostly as clerical workers, motor drivers, clerks, cooks, orderlies and storewomen. From 1941, besides administrative tasks, women were put on operational and semi-operational work. They were engaged in some 63 trades: they might work, for instance, as switchboard and teleprinter operators, kinetheodolite operators, despatch riders, cooks, draughtsmen, or

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<sup>1</sup> *Report of the Committee on Amenities and Welfare Conditions in the Three Women's Services*, Sec. VII-VIII; *Women's War Work in Britain* (British Information Services, New York, June 1943), p. 7.

orderlies; they might also be employed on experimental ranges, in gunnery research, on anti-aircraft duties, on radio-location duties, and with searchlight batteries. In the anti-aircraft batteries, A.T.S. were incorporated in mixed batteries and worked under the direct orders of the officer commanding the battery, taking over almost every duty except the actual operating and firing of the gun itself.<sup>1</sup> Many auxiliaries served in the Middle and Far East as well as in Europe.

### *The Women's Auxiliary Air Force*

The W.A.A.F. was formed by Royal Warrant in June 1939; later it was declared by the Defence (Women's Forces) Regulations, 1941, to be part of the armed forces of the Crown and, as such, its members were eligible for service on combatant duties, as in the A.T.S. Members of the W.A.A.F. are recruited among women from 17½ to 44 years of age (veterans of the first war are accepted up to 49 years of age).

While, in the First World War, the corresponding service (the Women's Royal Air Force) counted about 32,000 members, at the end of 1943, 180,000 officers and enlisted personnel were enrolled in the W.A.A.F. and employed on 65 various duties in the R.A.F. as technicians, radio mechanics and operators, flight mechanics, instrument mechanics, motor mechanics, sparking-plug testers, draughtswomen, coders, signallers, plotters, photographers, on radiolocation, handling of projectors, as range and height finders and in the meteorology intelligence service. In the Balloon Command, they were in complete charge of many barrage balloons. Although their duties do not include flying, two categories of the W.A.A.F. actually fly: flight mechanics testing engines or equipment in test flights, and nursing orderlies in flying ambulances. Until late in 1942, the members were almost entirely recruited from volunteers<sup>2</sup>, but in 1943 a substantial proportion of the intakes were called up from the National Service age groups. After the middle of 1944 an increasing number of W.A.A.F. served abroad.

### *The Women's Royal Naval Service*

The women enrolled in this service were not members of the armed forces of the Crown nor were they subject to the Naval

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<sup>1</sup> *Report of the Committee on Amenities and Welfare Conditions in the Three Women's Services, passim; Women's War Work in Britain, op. cit., p. 7.*

<sup>2</sup> *Report of the Committee on Amenities and Welfare Conditions in the Three Women's Services, passim; Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, 3 Aug. 1943, col. 2115; Women's War Work in Britain, op. cit., p. 8.*



Discipline Act. Nevertheless, the W.R.N.S. were officially stated to be "an integral part of the existing naval organisation". Recruits were accepted from the ages of 17½ to 45 inclusive, and even to 49 for women with special qualifications or to 50 for cooks.

The W.R.N.S.—which in the First World War never outnumbered 6,000—numbered 3,000 members at the end of 1939, 20,000 at the end of 1941, 40,000 at the end of 1942 and reached about 80,000 by the end of 1944. It is the only service which accepted immobile members living near naval establishments where W.R.N.S. personnel were required. They were employed in four categories of work, including 60 to 100 kinds of shore duties: (1) clerical; (2) communications; (3) domestic (30 per cent. of their total number); and (4) technical. In the last branch their work consisted, for instance, in the plotting of ships and aircraft, radio work and meteorology, testing and repairing torpedoes and depth charges, servicing the electrical equipment of coastal aircraft, repairing and testing small ships' engines, and painting and scrapping of motorboats. Later they undertook signal work; routing of convoys, both coastal and ocean; and they formed boat crews in harbour launches. They were also employed as instructors for sailors in some fields of their training. In the shore bases of the Fleet Air Arm, they filled the posts of meteorologists, and their work there was very similar to that of the W.A.A.F. Two thirds of the W.R.N.S. were doing non-administrative work, thus releasing naval officers.

The W.R.N.S. served outside the country (Shetlands, Middle East, Far East, North and South Africa, and Canada); they were at Singapore.<sup>1</sup>

### *Nursing Services with the Armed Forces*

Enrolment in the various nursing corps attached to the armed forces is voluntary. Nurses must be State registered nurses and they hold commissions from the rank of lieutenant, or the equivalent for nursing sisters, to colonel or matron-in-chief (with the exception of members of the Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Service); nurses must be prepared to serve either in the country or overseas.<sup>2</sup> The various nursing services with the armed forces are Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Service and Reserve, Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service and Reserve, the

<sup>1</sup> *Report of the Committee on Amenities and Welfare Conditions in the Three Women's Services, passim; Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, 10 Mar. 1943, col. 758-773.*

<sup>2</sup> *Women's War Work in Britain, op. cit., p. 9.*

Territorial Army Nursing Service and Reserve, and Princess Mary's Royal Air Force Nursing Service and Reserve. On 18 June 1945, 21,300 women were enrolled in these Nursing Services.<sup>1</sup>

#### OTHER ORGANISATIONS SPECIFICALLY RELATED TO CIVIL DEFENCE

##### *Royal Observer Corps*

Women were recruited for the Corps as observers under two categories for employment at observer posts and in operation centres. In Class A, they were paid by the week and performed at least a 48-hour week duty, and in Class B they were paid weekly by the hour and were employed on a part-time basis working a maximum of 24 hours a week; the normal continuous watch period was set at 4 hours.

Women employed at observer posts were responsible for identification of approaching aircraft and reporting to centre operation rooms; they were normally stationed at lonely isolated posts. Centre operation rooms were largely manned by young women whose duties consisted of passing on information received from posts to the Royal Air Force.

##### *Air Transport Auxiliary*

The number of women in the A.T.A.—which was under the Minister of Production—is not known, but women pilots were estimated to form about one tenth of its total numerical strength at the end of 1942. Women ferried light aircraft from the factories to the fields, and transported blood banks to hospitals over England only. Their wages—formerly two thirds of those of men—were raised to men's rates in 1943.<sup>2</sup>

##### *Home Guard*

Women rendered valuable assistance of a non-combatant character to the Home Guard; their services were voluntary and could be terminated at any time; they were known as Women Home Guard Auxiliaries. In April 1943, authority was given by the War Office for women to be nominated officially to Home Guard battalions to perform duties as clerks, telephonists, cooks and driving motor vehicles; they were not enrolled in the Home Guard. No uniform or equipment was issued to them, but a badge in brooch

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<sup>1</sup> *Ministry of Labour Gazette*, Oct. 1945, p. 173.

<sup>2</sup> *Women's War Work in Britain*, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

form was given to wear as a token that they were officially employed with the force. The total number employed in the Home Guard was upwards of 40,000; service with the Home Guard did not relieve them from undertaking other compulsory civilian duties.

### *Women's Voluntary Services*

The Women's Voluntary Service for Civil Defence was started in 1938 to encourage the training of women for air-raid precaution. With the war its functions were very greatly extended. During the air raids on Great Britain it worked under the Ministry of Home Security and the local authorities on raid and post-raid work; and in addition it undertook a large variety of essential war jobs for many different Government departments and constituted throughout the country a reserve of local unpaid labour on which local authorities could draw for services of all kinds in case of need. Its many activities included: emergency feeding of many different types; evacuation and billeting duties; the distribution of clothing for civilian relief; emergency transport duties; welfare and canteen work for the services; salvage propaganda and collection; national savings collection; camouflage net work; propaganda for economies of all kinds on the domestic front; and knitting of comforts for the forces.

The W.V.S. possessed no funds, and its members served the community in a purely voluntary capacity. Its normal membership approximated to 1,000,000 women drawn from all sections of the community. Its members were for the most part married women (often in the older age groups) with home ties which prevented their undertaking war work other than in their own locality. Some were able to work full time, others part time.<sup>1</sup>

### *Firewomen*

Early in 1942 over 25,000 full-time women workers and 8,400 part-time women workers were employed in the National Fire Service as telephonists, despatch riders, drivers, truck and canteen drivers, and repairers of hoses. They had been accepted in the service since 1938. For full-time workers a training period lasted three weeks but training continued during the service and supplementary courses were also provided. Between the beginning of 1942 and the end of 1943, the number of part-time firewomen multiplied more than six times and consequently there was an

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<sup>1</sup> Information communicated by the Ministry of Labour and National Service.

increased demand for women officers for operational duties or specialised administrative posts in the National Fire Service. The vacancies were filled either by the promotion of firewomen or by collaboration between the Chief Regional Fire Officer and an appointment officer of the Ministry of Labour and National Service.<sup>1</sup>

### *Compulsory Fire-Guard Duties*

Fire-guard duties were first imposed on women in August 1942 by Orders issued under Regulations 26A, 27A of the Defence (General) Regulations, 1939. Women 20 to 45 years of age, unless they were exempted as provided by the Orders, were liable to perform fire-guard duties at business premises in areas where these duties were compulsory, for a period limited to 48 hours in each four-week period. Women of the same age groups might, unless exempted, be called upon for duties as members of the street fire party for the street in which they lived.<sup>2</sup>

### *The Navy, Army and Air Force Institute*

This corporation conducted canteens for the armed forces in barracks and camps at home and abroad (excepting India and Burma) and in the ships of the Royal Navy. It supplied also a considerable proportion of the messing goods required by the services.

N.A.A.F.I. was registered under the Companies Act as an association not for profit. Its control was vested in a council and board of management, the appointments to which were made by the service ministries. All profits on trading were returned to the services for the benefit of servicemen generally by the payment of rebate, discount and grants, and the provision of entertainments and various amenities.

The employees were all paid workers in various capacities: e.g., cooks, counterhands and canteen managers. The approximate number of employees at the end of December 1944 was 98,000.

### *Women's Auxiliary Police Corps*

Women were enrolled in this Corps to replace men of the police force made available for service in the forces or for war work. About

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<sup>1</sup> *The Times*, 10 Apr. 1943; British Press Service, release of 5 June 1942.

<sup>2</sup> The Fire Guard (Business and Government Premises) Order, 1943, dated 28 July 1943, Statutory Rules and Orders, 1943, No. 1044; the Fire Guard (Local Authority Services) Order, 1943, dated 28 July 1943, Statutory Rules and Orders, 1943, No. 1043.

5,000 regular and auxiliary policewomen were employed full time in England and Wales in June 1943. Some of the auxiliaries undertook the same duties as regular policewomen; others were engaged in driving, telephone operating, clerical work or canteen service.

### RESETTLEMENT IN CIVIL LIFE

The end of the war creates problems as regards the resettlement in civil life of some hundreds of thousands of women who had been called up or had volunteered for the women's services. Various measures have already been taken which concern men and women engaged in war service. It was decided that a form of demobilisation, better termed a reallocation of manpower, would be carried out at the end of the war with Germany for the utilisation of servicemen and women according to the circumstances created by a new military situation. Numbers of women who were employed before the war left their work for military service; their rights of reinstatement in their former employment have been guaranteed to the same extent as those of men. Those who, on account of their war service, interrupted or were not able to undertake studies qualifying them for skilled work, professional, technical and other similar posts will have the opportunity of taking courses for training or for further education. Women who have been disabled during their war service are dealt with under a broader scheme covering the training and resettlement of all disabled persons and designed to facilitate their participation in the industrial or commercial activities of the country. The future role (if any) of the women's services in the post-war reorganisation of the military services is being considered. However, the Prime Minister, in reply to a question on this subject, declared in the House of Commons in October 1944 that a decision could not be expected "for a considerable time".<sup>1</sup>

### *Demobilisation*

General demobilisation of the women's auxiliary services, as well as of the members of the forces was not to be carried out until the end of hostilities throughout the world. However, assuming that the war in Europe would end first, the Minister of Labour and National Service presented to Parliament a plan<sup>2</sup> for the interim

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<sup>1</sup> *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, 30 Oct. 1944, col. 742.

<sup>2</sup> MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND NATIONAL SERVICE: *Re-Allocation of Manpower between the Armed Forces and Civilian Employment during any Interim Period between the Defeat of Germany and the Defeat of Japan* (Cmd. 6548, H.M. Stationery Office, London, Sept. 1944).

period between the defeat of Germany and the defeat of Japan based on the need for a maximum deployment of forces to bring complete and final victory at the earliest possible moment. This plan is now being largely followed and forms the basis of the process of demobilisation. It is not actually a plan for demobilisation, but for reallocation of manpower between the forces and industry in order best to meet the requirements of the changed situation. Arrangements for release or transfer from the forces and related financial arrangements and benefits apply to women as well as to men, with the addition that married women have priority of release over other women in the services, if they so desire. The plan provides for two separate methods of selecting men and women for release from the forces: those selected according to their age and length of war service (Class A), and those selected on account of their qualifications for urgent reconstruction work on which a beginning must be made as soon as possible (Class B). A clearly marked difference is made as regards leave and payment in the treatment of the members released in Class A in their turn and of the members transferred in Class B out of their turn. Provision is made for release on compassionate grounds in accordance with arrangements already in force. Servicemen and servicewomen discharged on medical grounds receive the same benefits as those released in Class A. The Government has also introduced a scheme of war gratuities by way of reward for service. Pensions for disablement due to war service may take effect from the date of cessation of service pay and allowances. Civilian clothing, in addition to such service clothes as they will be allowed to retain, will be given to men released or transferred who have had at least six months' service; women will receive a cash grant and clothing coupons instead of civilian clothes.

### *Reinstatement in Civil Employment*

Rights of reinstatement in former employment were provided under the National Service (Armed Forces) Act, 1939, for men as well as for women who had been called up for service in the armed forces or in the women's auxiliary services or enrolled in a civil defence force under the National Service Act, 1941. The same rights were extended as from 1 August 1944 to volunteers for the armed forces and corresponding women's services by the Reinstatement in Civil Employment Act, 1944.<sup>1</sup> These persons may apply for

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<sup>1</sup> Reinstatement in Civil Employment Act, 1944, assented to 21 March 1944, came into operation 1 August 1944; 7 and 8 Geo. 6, Ch. 15; Statutory Rules and Orders, 1944, No. 879.

reinstatement under the Act, provided their war service ended on or after 1 August 1944. Persons, whose war service ended in the period 1 February 1944 to 31 July 1944, are treated for the purposes of the Act as if their war service had ended on 1 August 1944, and they have rights under the Act accordingly. Persons whose war service (including continued war service) under the Act ended before 1 February 1944, have no rights under the Act.

Applications to employers for reinstatement should be made in writing normally on or before the fifth Monday after the end of war service. While a valid application remains in force the former employer is under an obligation to take the applicant into employment at the first opportunity (if any) at which it is reasonable and practicable to do so, on or after the date notified by the applicant as that on which she will be available for employment.

The applicant should be taken into employment—

(1) in the occupation in which she was last employed before her war service began and on terms and conditions not less favourable to her than those which would have been applicable to her in that occupation had she not performed war service; or

(2) if that is not reasonable and practicable, in the most favourable occupation and on the most favourable terms and conditions which are reasonable and practicable in her case.

A person who is reinstated under the Act must be employed for the following 26 weeks or for so much of that period as is reasonable and practicable. During such period her occupation and the terms and conditions of employment are not to be changed to her detriment unless it ceases to be reasonable and practicable to maintain them unaltered, and in the latter event she is to be given the most favourable alternative that is reasonable and practicable. The period of 26 weeks is extended to 52 weeks in cases where the previous employment was a continuous period of not less than 52 weeks.

The Act established certain tests for what is "reasonable and practicable" in the reinstatement and continuous employment of any person. Their effect is to give preference to seniority in employment. The Act provides for arbitration machinery by means of reinstatement committees which have been appointed to deal with disputes and which are composed of a chairman and a representative of both employers and employees. Provision is also made for an appeal to an umpire.

#### *Training and Rehabilitation Facilities*

Facilities of various sorts have been provided for members of the armed forces and other services, including women, in order

that this future source of manpower may receive training or adequate education to provide the country with skilled workers and persons capable of assuming responsibilities in all fields of industrial, commercial and professional activities.

As regards non-disabled servicewomen, facilities will be available for industrial training as well as for further education. Suitably qualified women will be offered an opportunity to acquire greater skill or to improve their education, and to be in a position to engage in civil employment and take up occupations or posts for which skill or higher qualification are required.

Facilities for industrial training come under the Industrial Training Scheme designed for non-disabled men and women who have done industrial work of national importance.<sup>1</sup> First priority in the application of this Scheme will be given to men and women released from the services, including the armed forces, the Merchant Navy, civil defence services, National Fire Service, Police Auxiliaries and Civil Nursing Reserve.<sup>2</sup>

Facilities for further education and training are provided for members of the above-mentioned categories, under a scheme intended primarily for them. Courses of studies "beyond the secondary school standard" will be available on demobilisation for suitably qualified men and women whose education or training has been prevented or interrupted by war service. Successful applicants will be entitled to receive a grant enabling them to take the full course of training which they may need for the business or profession which they wish to take up. Such grants will vary according to the studies undertaken and other circumstances. Men and women who have been demobilised or discharged from their war service through disablement or on medical grounds, and who are not required by the Minister of Labour to undertake other forms of national service may apply for assistance under this scheme.<sup>3</sup>

### *Disabled Servicewomen*

The members of the women's services who have been disabled are covered by general measures<sup>4</sup> intended to promote and facilitate the training and resettlement of all persons substantially handicapped by injury, disease or congenital deformity and to enable such handicapped persons to obtain employment or undertake work

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> *Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons*, 6 Apr. 1944, cols. 2146-2147.

<sup>3</sup> MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND NATIONAL SERVICE: *Further Education and Training Scheme* (PL 120/1943, Apr. 1943).

<sup>4</sup> See p. 46.



on their own account.<sup>1</sup> Preference, however, is given to persons who have served whole time in the armed forces, Merchant Navy or women's services, if at any time training and rehabilitation facilities are not available for all persons who qualify under the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, according to an Order in Council which brought some sections of the Act into operation as from 1 August 1944.<sup>2</sup> Non-British women who, since 1 September 1939, have served for 12 months in the women's services or in the women's services of any allied Power, and also non-British women who have done work of national importance, are eligible for a course of training and rehabilitation, if they intend to reside in Great Britain or are prevented by war circumstances from returning to their own countries.<sup>3</sup>

### *Resettlement Advice Service*

Many women in the services will have been out of touch—some for considerable periods—with home life and everyday affairs, and there will, no doubt, be many problems and difficulties in connection with their return to civilian life on which they will be anxious to obtain help and advice. In addition they will want to know about the Government's schemes for resettlement and rehabilitation which have been described earlier in this document.

An official service, known as the Resettlement Advice Service, is being set up to give all possible help, by information and advice, to men and women in need of resettlement on account of their war service in the armed forces, the auxiliary services, the civil defence services or in industry.

For the purpose of this service, resettlement advice offices are being established by the Ministry of Labour and National Service in every town in which there is an employment exchange. The number, therefore, will be about 360. In addition, the needs of enquirers in areas served by subsidiary offices of the Ministry, *i.e.*, employment offices and branch employment offices, will, to the extent that these offices are unable to deal with enquiries, be met either by visits to those offices of an officer from the parent resettlement advice office or by an invitation to an enquirer to attend the nearest resettlement advice office. Thus there will be a comprehensive service throughout Great Britain.

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<sup>1</sup> Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, 1944, assented to 1 March 1944; 7 and 8 Geo. 6, Ch. 10.

<sup>2</sup> The Disabled Persons (Employment) Act, 1944 (Commencement) Order, 1944, dated 10 August 1944, Statutory Rules and Orders, 1944, No. 936.

<sup>3</sup> The Disabled Persons (Non-British Subjects) Regulations, 1944, dated 14 August 1944, Statutory Rules and Orders, 1944, No. 965.

A limited number of offices were to be opened in April, and the remainder in May and June 1946.

Some of the problems which will beset men and women on their release from the services will relate to matters with which the Ministry of Labour and National Service can assist individuals directly, *e.g.*, placing in employment or training for employment, and the resettlement advice offices will be able to give full information and advice about these. Other problems may be of a kind in which the individual's needs can only be met by some other Government department or by a local authority or voluntary organisation. The resettlement advice offices will be able to give general information about all such problems, whether, they are of a personal or domestic nature, and to tell enquirers exactly where and how they should apply for the facilities or assistance they require. Every effort will be made to save enquirers from having to make avoidable journeys or written requests for information.

The offices will be staffed by officers who have been specially trained for the purpose and who will work in close contact and friendly co-operation with the local officials of statutory and voluntary bodies, so that all concerned may be accurately informed on matters arising in the course of the advisory work and in order that, by close co-operation, the problems of enquirers may be solved.

A note with regard to the Service is included in the booklet, *Release and Resettlement*, issued to every serviceman and woman in the armed forces. This booklet includes information on certain statutory rights to which individuals will be entitled on their release from the forces and about the Government's resettlement and rehabilitation schemes, such as interrupted apprenticeships, vocational training, further education and training, resettlement grants, overseas resettlement, and the rehabilitation of disabled persons.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Information communicated by the Ministry of Labour and National Service.

## CONCLUSION

The method adopted in the foregoing chapters was to study, for each question dealt with, the facts and developments which characterised the wartime employment of women in the United Kingdom. An attempt was also made to indicate employment trends in the post-war period.

The immediate effects of war conditions on the employment of women are, in certain respects, similar to those of the First World War. Both were total wars necessitating the general mobilisation of the nation's industrial and military strength. Both wars had also the effect of speeding up the normal extension of women's employment by opening to them new fields of activity and by bringing about a clearer recognition of the contribution which women workers can make.

It should be noted, however, that developments were not on the same scale in both wars. For instance, the proportion of female workers out of the total number of workers at the peak of industrial mobilisation in the two wars was 37 per cent. in July 1918 and 39.4 in June 1944. The difference is more apparent when the additional numbers of women workers on the employment market are considered. In July 1918 there were 1,345,000 new recruits compared with 1914; in June 1944 there were 2,428,000 new recruits (1,760,000 in industry, agriculture, commerce and the Civil Service) compared with June 1939.

In the metallurgical and chemical industries, which are the most closely related to war production, the extent to which women workers were utilised differed widely in the two wars. Thus in July 1918 there were 698,000 women workers in these industries (594,000 in metallurgical industries and 104,000 in chemical industries, that is to say, 25 per cent. and 39 per cent. respectively of the total number of workers in these industries) and, of these, 488,000 were new recruits. In June 1944, 1,851,000 women were employed in metallurgical and chemical industries, that is to say, 36.6 per cent. of the total number of workers; 1,345,000 new recruits had entered these industries since June 1939.

In the transport industry the number of women workers rose from 18,200 in July 1914 to 117,200 in July 1918, while it rose from 51,000 in June 1939 to 212,000 in June 1944. In other words,

while the total number of women workers was increased by 99,000 during the First World War, 161,000 new female recruits joined the ranks of the transport workers during the Second World War.

In the Civil Service (national and local Government) the number of women employees rose from 262,200 in July 1914 to 460,200 in July 1918—an increase of 198,000. In June 1930 there were 449,000 women employed in the Civil Service, while in June 1944 there were 963,000—an increase of 514,000.

These examples suffice to prove that the problems to be faced today as regards the redistribution of women workers in a peacetime economy are on a much larger scale than after the First World War.

Nevertheless, at the end of the First World War, as was pointed out in the Introduction, the social and economic conditions which controlled the labour market did not permit the full development of the opportunities which had been open to women during the war. The circumstances in which women were mobilised and their employment regulated during the Second World War, as well as the general conditions prevailing in the country at the close of the war, permit the assumption, from a fair estimate of the facts, that the economic status of women will be substantially modified.

During the recent war, for the first time in the history of democratic countries, women were mobilised for work in industry or for service in the military forces; large numbers of young women were transferred from one area to another in order to meet the urgent needs of war production; and the great majority of women were immediately drawn into the war effort. Women with children were exempted from mobilisation regulations, but they played their part in national defence, in so far as they were able, by joining some branch of the voluntary services or by voluntarily taking a job. The mere fact that women in the United Kingdom were mobilised is bound to have an important psychological effect. Female labour has definitely ceased to be considered as a marginal factor in the industrial labour power; it has played an essential part in the war effort, as was acknowledged on several occasions by the Prime Minister and the Minister of Labour and National Service.

Now that the war is over, the following questions arise: what is to be the fate of women workers and what chances have they of consolidating and increasing under peacetime conditions the gains which they won in emergency conditions?

From the point of view of the volume of female labour, it is obvious that the dominant factor is the problem of full employment. The immediate needs of reconstruction are so urgent that, in spite of a certain amount of temporary and sporadic unemployment caused by the reconversion of industry, the shortage of labour is

already felt or is expected in every field of activity. As regards the problem of full employment at a later period, the Government has given particular attention to the drawing-up of a long-term plan for maintaining employment at a "stable and high" level<sup>1</sup>, which was favourably received both by Parliament and by public opinion.

At present women are being warmly encouraged to go on working or to go back into employment. In his speech of 3 March 1946<sup>2</sup>, the Prime Minister made an earnest appeal to women in this respect. However, a considerable number of women, mostly married women, have withdrawn from the labour market. Data are lacking which would permit a precise estimate of the proportion of women workers who, of their own free will, are likely to leave the labour market, and a calculation of the future volume of female employment.

The redistribution of workers, in line with the needs of peacetime industry, has already begun. As might be expected, the number of women working in the industries directly essential to war production has decreased considerably, while there has been a slight increase in the number of women working in industries which cater to civilian needs. It is to be expected that this trend will become more and more marked as peacetime activities get into full swing.

As regards the make-up of the female labour force, considerable changes in distribution took place during the war. The "abnormal" increase in the number of female workers in industry was not composed solely of new recruits but, for the most part, of workers from those occupations which have the least direct bearing on war production; as a rule there are occupations which employ a large proportion of women, for example, domestic service and retail trade. Therefore the extension of female employment in industry had the effect of giving to women who normally would have had no such opportunity a knowledge and, to some extent, a taste for industrial work—often for skilled industrial work. It is true that a great number of women worked during the war at unskilled trades which required only slight training, but a certain proportion, certainly greater than in the First World War, received training which was no doubt, in many cases, intensive and narrowly specialised, but which qualified them for semi-skilled and skilled jobs.

A certain number of large companies have even admitted women to apprenticeship in industry, especially in engineering and electrical trades. Moreover, on account of the technological nature of the

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<sup>1</sup> *Employment Policy* (Cmd. 6527, H.M. Stationery Office, London, May 1944)

<sup>2</sup> *New York Times*, 4 Mar. 1946.

war, women had to be recruited and trained for technical and scientific jobs in industry as well as in the auxiliary military services. The natural consequence of these developments is that a larger proportion of women will turn to industrial employment than was formerly the case.

The rehabilitation and vocational training and retraining courses given under Government schemes are open to both men and women who were members of the military services, or who were employed as war workers. The rate of allowances paid for the duration of the courses differs, however, according to sex.

Owing to the exigencies of war, new processes of production were developed which may have a direct bearing on the status of women in industry; improved technology, the extension of mechanical processes of production and the resulting simplification of industrial jobs, as well as the development of measures for industrial welfare, have the effect of establishing working conditions favourable to the employment of female labour. Moreover, the policy of intense production which the United Kingdom intends to follow is a factor which tends to retain women workers in industry. On the other hand, the experience gained in the war showed that for certain categories of industrial occupations women workers were extremely satisfactory, for example, for repetitive work, and for jobs which require accuracy and patience, such as electrical assembly, welding and riveting. Thus, in conditions of full employment, women workers would be in greater demand for certain categories of industrial occupations in which women were not so generally employed before the war. Finally, the extension of the trade union organisation of women workers as well as the general attitude of trade unions as regards female employment in the post-war period will contribute to safeguard women's interests in collective bargaining negotiations.

Nevertheless, two fundamental questions have remained unsolved: (1) the employment of women in occupations reserved to men before the war and opened to women because of the emergency situation; this question raises the general problem of the rigid classification of jobs as "women's jobs" and "men's jobs"; and (2) the question of equal pay for equal work. It is obvious that a close connection exists between the admission of women to occupations which before the war were considered "men's jobs" and the application of the principle of remuneration according to job content. A fact which has a direct bearing on the future of women workers is that agreements reached between employers' organisations and trade unions as regards the employment of women in occupations which until the war were exclusively "men's jobs"

are valid only for the duration of the war. There is therefore no guarantee that the gains made during the war in this respect will be consolidated.

On the other hand, although the principle of equal pay for equal work was recognised and partially applied in war industries, it was, in fact, by no means general and the attempts made to fix the rate for the job, especially in engineering, have not yet met with success. It should be pointed out, in this connection, that the establishment of the family allowance scheme which will soon be enforced will eliminate, at least in part, one of the objections frequently made to the application of the equal pay principle, namely, that family responsibilities are heavier for men than for women. The question of equal pay for equal work is now being studied by a Royal Commission which was appointed for this purpose.

Now that the armed forces are being demobilised and male workers are returning to the employment market, surplus women in industrial occupations may find themselves in a critical position. The occupations considered as essentially "women's jobs" afford a natural outlet for female workers. There is at present a labour shortage in these occupations, and the plans which are being developed for the post-war period will doubtless increase their labour requirements. However, the working conditions in these women's jobs—nursing, social service and domestic work—were very poor, largely on account of the almost complete lack of trade union organisation in these fields.

For the above reasons, even during the war, the Government was forced to intervene with a view to reorganising some of the occupations considered as essentially "women's jobs", in which conditions of work compared very unfavourably with those in industrial employments, when it became evident that women would have to be directed towards these occupations. This was the case for domestic work in institutions, hotels and restaurants, as well as for nursing. As has been pointed out in this study, the conditions of work, wages and organisation of these occupations were examined and appreciably improved. Efforts have been made to raise the status of domestic work in private households and to establish proper conditions of work. Long-range reforms were effected or are still being studied in order to attract women to these types of work and to meet the urgent need of workers. These are favourable developments of the emergency period which should be noted as having permanent value.

The marriage bar is still maintained in certain employments. During the war, however, temporary exemptions were made for

employment as teachers and in the Civil Service (national and local Government). Permanent reforms were also effected in this respect. The Education Act of 1944 provides that no woman shall be disqualified for employment as a teacher or be dismissed from such employment, by reason only of marriage. This provision constitutes a precedent which may have far-reaching results in other fields where this restriction still exists. A commission has already been appointed to study the question of the employment of married women in the Civil Service.

In other occupations the employment of married women is above all a practical problem. The great numbers of married women who were employed during the war clearly showed the material difficulties which these women workers have to face. The setting-up of day nurseries and of communal restaurants, adjustments of working hours, the extension of part-time employment and other facilities of a similar nature were some of the measures taken to cope with these difficulties. It is not possible to foresee what will be the fate of those married women who worked on war production. It is probable that a fairly large proportion will withdraw from the labour market. Nevertheless it was found necessary to extend the benefits of unemployment insurance to married women who, although not normally employed in an occupation covered by unemployment insurance, are able to prove that they were employed during the war in work of national importance.<sup>1</sup>

At the present time, when a tremendous effort is being made to increase production and when a great number of women may decide, on account of their private circumstances, to remain in employment, the various measures which were taken to facilitate their employment during the war will continue to be useful during the reconversion period. Thus, efforts are being made to establish a widespread system of kindergartens and nursery schools for children between 2 and 5 years of age, in accordance with the 1944 Education Act. Provision has also been made for generalising school meals, which were supplied in greatly increased numbers during the war. Works canteens also seem to have become firmly established by custom and will contribute to lighten the double task of married women workers who have domestic responsibilities.

It should also be noted that lasting progress has been made in the admission of women to higher education which gives access to scientific or liberal professions. This progress goes hand in hand with the remarkable development of scientific research and laboratory work during the war, which led to the recruiting of

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<sup>1</sup> Statutory Rules and Orders, 1945, No. 1243.



large female staffs, both scientific and technical. Moreover, the far-reaching scheme of medical service proposed by the Government will require a larger medical staff which is not yet available. The Government is making efforts to recruit women in greater numbers as students in medical schools. Women have been admitted to certain higher technical schools, and scholarships have been established by private bodies to aid young women who wish to continue their higher scientific education in physics, chemistry, civil engineering, aeronautical construction or electricity.<sup>1</sup>

Finally, a new psychological approach to the subject of women's work now exists and it is this changed mental attitude that will contribute most to bringing the status of British women nearer to complete equality. Both in the armed forces and in the Civil Service highly responsible posts were held by women, and the safety of countless lives depended on their ability and discretion in carrying out their duties. The general public is now quite accustomed to seeing important tasks entrusted to women. It is to be expected that the question of the access of women to the higher posts in the Diplomatic and Civil Service, which was studied in an I.L.O. publication of 1939<sup>2</sup>, will now be examined in a light more favourable to the removal of restrictions.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Woman Engineer* (Journal of the Women's Engineering Society), Vol. VI, No. 2, Spring 1945.

<sup>2</sup> *The Law and Women's Work*, *op. cit.* p. 504.



## **PART II**

### **United States**



## INTRODUCTION

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

It may be appropriate to give as a background to the study on women's employment during the Second World War a general picture of the trends which characterised women's employment in the United States from 1910 to 1930, including therefore the long-range effects of the First World War. This will undoubtedly emphasise the magnitude of the problems arising from the employment of women during the recent war.

#### EXTENT AND DISTRIBUTION OF THE FEMALE LABOUR FORCE, 1910-1920

During this period, the proportion of women gainfully occupied to the total of persons gainfully occupied did not change substantially; it remained close to one fifth, with a slight decrease from 21.2 per cent. in 1910 to 20.5 in 1920, although the number of women gainfully employed rose by a little more than 4 per cent., from 8,075,772 in 1910 to 8,549,511 in 1920.

Table I, overleaf, gives the numbers and the relative importance of the female labour force (10 years of age and over) among the various occupations as of 1910 and 1920<sup>1</sup>:

From 1910 to 1920, it is worth noting that the absolute number of women increased to a varying extent in most occupations, except in agriculture and in domestic and personal service. The largest increase occurred in clerical occupations. More than half (64.1 per cent.) of the women were employed in 1920 in professional service, domestic and personal service, and clerical occupations; the proportion of women in these occupations was somewhat higher than in 1910, when they also represented the largest field of women's employment (47.7 per cent.). With a decrease in the number and proportion of women in domestic and personal service, there was a substantial increase in the number of women employed

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, Bureau of the Census, Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930: *Population* (Washington, D.C., 1933), Vol. V, *General Report on Occupations*, p. 39.

TABLE I. GAINFUL WOMEN 10 YEARS OLD AND OVER, BY GENERAL DIVISIONS OF OCCUPATIONS (UNITED STATES)

(1910 and 1920)

Occupations	Numbers		Per cent. of total		Per cent. of distribution	
	1910	1920	1910	1920	1910	1920
All occupations . . . . .	8,075,772	8,549,511	21.2	20.5	100.0	100.0
Agriculture . . . . .	1,806,624	1,083,146	14.6	10.2	22.4	12.7
Forestry and fishing . . . .	557	673	0.2	0.2	<sup>1</sup>	<sup>1</sup>
Extraction of minerals . . .	1,094	2,864	0.1	0.3	<sup>1</sup>	<sup>1</sup>
Manufacturing and mechanical industries . . . .	1,820,847	1,930,352	17.1	15.0	22.5	22.6
Transportation and communication . . . . .	115,347	224,270	4.3	7.2	1.4	2.6
Trade . . . . .	472,703	671,983	13.0	15.8	5.9	7.9
Public service (not elsewhere classified) . . . . .	4,836	10,586	1.1	1.4	0.1	0.1
Professional service . . . .	734,752	1,017,030	42.9	46.8	9.1	11.9
Domestic and personal service . . . . .	2,530,403	2,186,682	67.4	64.7	31.3	25.6
Clerical occupations . . . .	588,609	1,421,925	34.3	45.7	7.3	16.6

<sup>1</sup> Less than 0.1 per cent.

in professional service and clerical occupations, as well as in their relative importance in these fields, and in the proportion of women employed in these occupations compared to the total female gainful population.

This was attributed mainly to the increase in the number of women teachers and nurses. From 1910 to 1920 the number of women teachers increased by more than 160,000, and the number of trained nurses by more than 67,000, while the total number of women gainfully employed in professional service increased by a little more than 282,000.<sup>1</sup>

In manufacturing and mechanical industries, the situation remained practically the same, although the proportion of women in the total labour force in this field decreased slightly, from 17.1 to 15.0 per cent. In transportation and communication, the number of women almost doubled, but they still represented a small portion of the total of women gainfully employed, as well as of the total labour force in this field. In trade, there was also some advance in women's employment.

It may be asked, however, what were the specific effects of that war on women's employment. A study made by the Women's Bureau in 1920 throws some light on the question, at least as

<sup>1</sup> *General Report on Occupations, op. cit.*, p. 20.

regards the mechanical occupations, since the report covered essentially the manufacturing and mechanical departments of all the principal peace and wartime industries.<sup>1</sup>

Not only did the number of women factory workers increase substantially during the war, but also their proportion in the total labour force—from 65 per 1,000 to 100 per 1,000 in “leading war agent and implement industries”, for instance. Women were engaged in the main in unskilled or semi-skilled operations. On account of the labour shortage, however, woman labour was used, though on a small scale, in “craftsmanly occupations”, and in occupations which before the war were essentially masculine, such as work in the machine shop and the tool room, in the iron and steel industry; women were also introduced in the steel works and rolling mills. They were taught “to read blueprints, to understand the characters of different metals, to grasp the purposes and capabilities of various machine tools, to adjust their mechanism, to set up, to measure and to mark their own work, and be responsible for its quality as well as for its quantity”. Women were given a chance in occupations requiring “judgment, precision and decision”.<sup>2</sup> But the employment of women on skilled work was limited by several important factors. Little encouragement was given by public or private vocational institutions to the training of women in mechanical occupations, and the general policy of organised labour was—officially or practically—to discourage apprentice work for women in skilled occupations; in fact, most of the training of women employed on skilled work was done by the employing firms. But at the end of the war, women remained in most occupations requiring a high degree of skill in which they had been employed during the war.

#### WOMEN IN TRADE UNIONS, 1910-1920

It appears difficult to gather substantial information on female participation in trade unions during the First World War. Valuable data exist, however, which cover the 1910-1920 decade. It may be assumed that the conclusions reached by analysing this material are nevertheless relevant to the purpose of this study, which is to indicate the general trends in women's participation in trade unions, as determined or influenced—if at all—by conditions prevailing during the first war.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. WOMEN'S BUREAU: *The New Position of Women in American Industry*, Bulletin No. 12 (Washington, D.C., 1920).

<sup>2</sup> *The New Position of Women in American Industry*, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

Generally speaking, the increase in trade union membership before that war was essentially due to gains by craft unions in the building trades, steam railroad and printing industries and by the coming into power of the United Mine Workers. From 1915 to 1920, the situation changed through the spread of unionism among semi-skilled and unskilled workers and into industries, hitherto almost totally unorganised.<sup>1</sup>

This development has certainly had a bearing upon female trade union organisation, and should be kept in mind while considering the trends of female membership during that period.

From 1910 to 1920, female trade union membership increased almost fivefold, from 76,748 to 396,900. This increase is all the more remarkable in that women were to a very large extent employed in occupations such as trade and domestic service, in which trade union organisation was poor, among men as well as among women, and that women did not work in industries like building and mining, in which trade union organisation had reached a high level.<sup>2</sup>

Female trade union membership increased in all trade unions during the period considered (except among the musicians and the brewery workers). Important organisations were formed: the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, the Amalgamated Textile Workers, and the telephone operators' branch of the Electrical Workers; these unions contributed about 100,000 members, *i.e.*, nearly one fourth of the total membership.<sup>3</sup>

The clothing industry retained its predominant place; while in 1910 the International Ladies' Garment Workers and the United Garment Workers made up 40 per cent. of the total female membership, by 1920 these unions, together with the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, accounted for 42 per cent. of the total female membership. But by 1920 the shoe, textile, railway clerks, and electrical workers' unions had risen, as far as the number of members is concerned, to a place of importance, as shown by the following figures<sup>4</sup>:

Name of union	Female membership	
	1910	1920
Boot and Shoe Workers . . . . .	5,500	15,000
Textile Workers, Amalgamated . . . . .	—	15,000
Textile Workers, United . . . . .	5,955	40,000
Railway Clerks . . . . .	62	35,000
Electrical Workers . . . . .	—	14,000

<sup>1</sup> LEO WOLMAN: *The Growth of American Trade Unions, 1880-1923* (National Bureau of Economic Research, Inc., New York, 1924), pp. 22-23.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 23-24.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 98-99.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*



It should be borne in mind that among the industries in which trade union organisation made substantial headway as regards the total membership, are the textile industry, steam transportation (particularly the Railway Clerks) and the clothing industry<sup>1</sup>, and women's participation in trade unions increased during this decade along the same lines.

Strong female organisation was not achieved in many industries, but substantial advances were made in manufacturing industries; the highest level of organisation was reached in the clothing, the leather (including the shoe industry), the printing and publishing, liquor and beverage and the textile industry, as shown by the following table<sup>2</sup>:

TABLE II. LEVEL OF TRADE UNION ORGANISATION OF WOMEN,  
MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES  
(1910 and 1920)

Industry	Per cent. of organisation among female wage earners in manufacturing industries	
	1920	1910
All manufacturing.....	18.3	5.2
Chemical and allied.....	—	0.6
Clay, glass and stone.....	8.5	0.8
Clothing.....	46.0	11.2
Food.....	5.6	—
Iron and steel.....	0.7	—
Leather.....	42.6	8.0
Liquor and beverage.....	21.5	24.4
Lumber.....	—	2.1
Metal (except iron and steel).....	—	—
Paper and pulp.....	1.3	0.8
Printing and publishing.....	25.0	11.6
Textile.....	11.5	2.6
Cigar and tobacco.....	13.5	8.0

In the telegraph and telephone industry, the Railroad Telegraphers' Union and the telephone operators' branch of the Electrical Workers' Union were responsible for an organisation of 7 per cent.<sup>3</sup>

The increased participation of women in trade unions was achieved in spite of many difficulties, inherent not only in the distribution of the female labour force—for the main part in industries where trade union organisation was still weak—but also in the attitude of the trade unions themselves. The practice in

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 106.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 107.

respect to the admission of women members into the trade unions differed widely. In general, in industries where women had been but recently introduced, trade unions opposed the admission of women. In industries where the female labour force was substantial, women were accepted, but under certain conditions. Special dues were fixed at a lower scale for women members than for men; this measure had the effect of entitling women to reduced union benefits. Another possibility which brought about the same results was the organisation of special unions where females were employed; these locals had a different status from male unions. This policy had an immediate bearing on women's conditions of work, particularly wages: it meant, in fact, the recognition by the labour unions of the wage discrimination between men and women workers.

In the clothing industry, however, where women were employed in a large proportion, some unions made no discrimination between male and female members.

In order to secure to women a proper status as workers and as trade union members, and also to control the increased labour force, efforts were made by the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor in several directions.

On the questions of special dues and fees for women trade union members, the President of the A.F. of L. had pointed out as early as 1905 that the fixing of lower initiation fees and dues for women, though they may have been fixed in some cases in order to attract women members, were in fact furthering the principle of inequality of the sexes, which was contrary to the aims of the Federation.

As a result of war conditions—speeded mass production and influx of women into the labour force—the A.F. of L. restated, at its convention of 1917, its policy of equal pay for equal work, which it had affirmed as far back as 1883. In 1918, in order to intensify the recruitment of women members, the Executive Council of the A. F. of L. organised, for the first time in the history of the Federation, a group of eight or nine women organisers to carry on an intensive organisation campaign among women workers.

At its convention of 1918, the Executive Council made a request that all the affiliated organisations (national and international) amend their constitutions, if necessary, and admit women into their membership.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Theresa WOLFSON: *The Woman Worker and the Trade Unions* (International Publishers, New York, 1926), Ch. III.

## WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT, 1920-1930

From 1920 to 1930, female employment continued to increase both absolutely and relatively; the number of women gainfully employed rose from 8,549,511 to 10,752,116; and the proportion of women in the total labour force reached 22.0 per cent. in 1930, as compared with 20.5 in 1920.

Generally speaking, the main trends, with some significant exceptions, continued to develop during this decade.

The interesting new development was the decrease in the importance of women in manufacturing and mechanical industries, where the number of women dropped from 1,930,352 to 1,886,307, and the percentage of females to males employed in this field from 15.0 to 13.4. Moreover, while 22.6 per cent. of the women gainfully employed in 1920 were to be found in these industries, their proportion was only 17.5 in 1930.<sup>1</sup>

These general figures need some explanation. It is true that the importance of women decreased in most manufacturing and mechanical industries, particularly among dressmakers and seamstresses and among operatives in the tobacco industry. But in some fields the number of women operatives increased considerably, particularly in expanding industries such as clothing food and allied products, iron and steel, machinery and vehicle (particularly in the automobile industry), electrical machinery and supply, and in the chemical and allied industries.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *General Report on Occupations, op. cit.*, p. 39.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, table 1, pp. 11 *et seq.*

## CHAPTER I

### WOMEN IN THE LABOUR MARKET

#### CHANGES IN THE VOLUME OF THE FEMALE LABOUR FORCE

The United States entered the war with over 5 million unemployed men, and by the middle of 1943, only 600,000 men were still without jobs. The depletion of this source of labour supply centred attention on the next major source—the more than 30 million women who were not gainfully occupied.<sup>1</sup>

Although the number of women in employment had since the inception of the national defence programme increased steadily, the task of bringing larger numbers into active participation in industry was one of the most important manpower problems facing the country during 1943 and 1944. According to estimates by the War Manpower Commission, manpower requirements were, for the period between July 1943 and July 1944, 4 million additional persons for the armed forces and munitions industries. This task had to be accomplished in spite of the great stringency in the manpower market. Previously, the nation had been able to draw heavily on the unemployed, who were easily absorbed into employment near their homes, but after 1943, with no such reserve, the problem was to transfer workers from industry to the armed forces, from industry to industry, and from area to area.<sup>2</sup>

The expansion of women's employment is shown by a comparison of employment figures for 1941 and 1944. The number of women employed in the civilian labour force, which was 10,880,000 in March 1941 and 12,940,000 in August 1941, increased to 16,850,000 in March 1944 and 18,030,000 in August 1944.<sup>3</sup>

In March 1940, the number of women in non-agricultural occupations was 10,730,000; gradually this number increased to 11,760,000 in January 1942. During 1942, women entered non-agricultural employment at a much more accelerated pace, and

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<sup>1</sup> OFFICE OF WAR INFORMATION, War Manpower Commission, press release of 3 Sept. 1943.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, Bureau of the Census: *Monthly Report on the Labor Force*, Special Surveys, MRLF No. 27 (Washington, D.C., 13 Sept. 1944).

their number rose to 14,720,000 in December of the same year; in 1943, another 1,390,000 were added to the female non-agricultural labour force, which, in December 1943, was 16,110,000 strong. Slight increases were noticeable until July 1944, when 16,440,000 were engaged in non-agricultural pursuits, representing an all-time peak in this field of employment.<sup>1</sup>

The extension of female employment in agricultural work was as substantial as in non-agricultural occupations. While in June 1940, 1,720,000 women were thus employed, 2,210,000 women in June 1943, and 2,120,000 women in June 1944, belonged to the agricultural labour force.<sup>2</sup>

Meanwhile the number of unemployed female workers declined (with seasonal fluctuations) from 1,770,000 in March 1940 and 1,410,000 in March 1941, to 910,000 in March 1942, 450,000 in March 1943 and 400,000 in March 1944. In other words, some 1,370,000 unemployed women were absorbed into employment in the four years between March 1940 and March 1944, the greatest rate of absorption being between March 1941 and March 1943, when some 960,000 unemployed women found jobs.<sup>3</sup>

While the volume of female labour was expanding, the relative importance of the female civilian labour force also increased. Whereas in March 1940 women made up 26.0 per cent. of the civilian labour force, they accounted for 31.8 per cent. in February 1944 and 34 per cent. in December 1944.<sup>4</sup>

#### TRENDS IN WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT IN REPRESENTATIVE STATES

Detailed information obtained from some States shows instances of striking increases in women's industrial employment and of a wide redistribution of the female labour force.

##### *California*

One of the most spectacular developments occurred in California, chiefly as a result of the wartime expansion of the aircraft and shipbuilding industry.<sup>5</sup> While in 1941 manufacturing industries in this State employed an average of 65,300 women factory wage

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, Bureau of the Census: *Sources of Women Workers in Wartime*, Series SS, No. 1, 25 Aug. 1944; *Monthly Labor Review*, Feb. 1945, p. 290.

<sup>5</sup> DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS, Division of Labor Statistics and Law Enforcement, State of California: *Employment of Women in California*, Dec. 1943, Jan., Feb., Mar. and May 1944.

earners, the number of women had risen to 106,400 in 1942, and to 229,900 in 1943, showing a 252.1 per cent. increase over 1941. Between April 1941 and the middle of 1944, the number of women factory workers increased by 325 per cent.

In these three years the percentage of female workers was respectively 14.7 per cent., 15.9 per cent., and 26.2 per cent. In the durable-goods industries the increase of 1943 over 1941 was 1697.8 per cent.; in the non-durable goods industries 21 per cent. only. While in 1941, women accounted for 3.3 per cent. of the total factory force in durable-goods plants, they averaged 23.1 per cent. in 1943; in the non-durable goods industries, the proportion of women wage earners increased from 33.4 per cent. in 1941 to 38.5 per cent. in 1943.

Female wage earners' employment increased steadily until August 1943, when it reached an all-time peak of 276,000, which was more than four times the average number employed in 1941. Table III shows the high level of female employment at the beginning of 1944 in all manufacturing industries compared with the corresponding month in the preceding years.

TABLE III. NUMBER OF WOMEN WAGE EARNERS IN MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES, IN SELECTED MONTHS (STATE OF CALIFORNIA)  
(1942-1944)

	All manufacturing industries	Non-durable goods	Durable goods
January			
1942.....	57,600	45,200	12,400
1943.....	185,300	55,700	129,600
1944.....	241,900	64,300	177,600
February			
1942.....	61,000	45,900	15,100
1943.....	196,000	57,700	139,100
1944.....	239,800	65,200	174,600
March			
1942.....	61,700	44,700	17,000
1943.....	203,700	56,000	147,700
1944.....	231,800	63,700	168,100
April			
1942.....	70,700	51,300	19,400
1943.....	216,700	63,500	153,200
1944.....	239,900	74,300	165,600

For aircraft and shipbuilding, the figures are as follows:

	March 1942	March 1943	March 1944
Aircraft.....	8,600	102,200	87,700
Shipbuilding.....	(Less than 100 female wage earners reported)	15,200	37,200

Since August 1944 the number of women factory workers in manufacturing industries has been declining. This decrease represents chiefly reductions in aircraft and shipbuilding production. It was found in this State that war industries were losing women factory workers at a faster rate than male workers, particularly in the shipbuilding industry. In January 1945 women wage earners in the durable-goods manufacturing industries numbered 136,300, a decline of 2 per cent. from December 1944, and of 23 per cent. from January 1944, while the male production force in these industries declined by only 19 per cent. from January 1944. In shipbuilding, particularly, the number of women wage earners decreased from 38,600 in January 1944 to 31,700 in December 1944, and 29,200 in January 1945.

On the other hand, female wage earners in non-durable goods manufacturing industries were meanwhile increasing in number at a faster rate than men. The factory labour force in this field rose to 74,500 in January 1945, representing an increase of 8 per cent. over January 1944, while the number of male factory workers rose by only 6 per cent. during the same period.

In January 1945, the distribution of the female labour force was as indicated in the following table, which allows also a comparison with the female labour force distribution in January 1944.<sup>1</sup>

TABLE IV. NUMBER OF WOMEN WAGE EARNERS,  
BY MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES (STATE OF CALIFORNIA)

(January 1944-January 1945)

Industries	January 1945	January 1944
All manufacturing industries . . . . .	210,800	246,700
Non-durable goods . . . . .	74,500	69,100
Durable goods . . . . .	136,300	177,600
Aircraft . . . . .	66,000	94,800
Shipbuilding . . . . .	29,200	38,600
Food and tobacco . . . . .	24,700	20,800
Textiles and apparel . . . . .	24,400	23,800
Iron and steel products . . . . .	9,300	10,900
Machinery (except electrical) . . . . .	8,200	8,600
Electrical machinery and equipment . . . . .	7,200	8,300
Rubber products . . . . .	6,400	7,400
Furniture and wood products . . . . .	6,500	6,600

<sup>1</sup> DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS, Division of Labor Statistics and Law Enforcement, State of California: *Employment of Women in California*, Jan. 1945.

*State of New York*

The expansion of women's employment in the State of New York has been remarkable, not only on account of the increase in the number of women employed, but also because of the changes which have occurred in the distribution of women workers in manufacturing industries during the war years, and the variations in the relative importance of the female labour force in the different industries.

In all the manufacturing industries the total number of employees increased during the war; the increased women's employment accounted for a large proportion of this growth, since in some of these industries there was an actual decrease in the number of male workers, and the number of women was great enough to cause a net increase in total employment, except in the textile-mill products and apparel industry.<sup>1</sup>

From the figures given in the table below, it appears that the increase in the relative importance of women wage earners reached its peak around November 1943, and in 1944 was on the decline or at least stabilised in most war industries. The industries in which the importance of women workers increased at an accelerated rate, particularly in 1942-43, are those in which their proportion was relatively not great in earlier years and which were vital to war production. Thus, in the first 10 months of 1942 alone, women's employment increased by 122.7 per cent. in the metal and machinery industry, by 83.5 per cent. in the rubber products manufactures, by 57.3 per cent. in the stone, clay and glass industry, and by 40.8 per cent. in the food and tobacco products industry. In all, the number of female wage earners increased by 25.3 per cent. during these 10 months.<sup>2</sup>

The apparel industries, which normally employ both the largest number and the highest percentage of women workers, had the smallest increase in the proportion of women workers than any other major industrial group during the war. The percentage of all jobs held by women in these industries rose from 61.1 to 62.3 per cent. only from January 1942 to November 1944.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, New York State: *Industrial Bulletin and Employment Review*, Nov. 1942, pp. 384, 385 and 407; Nov.-Dec. 1944, p. 356.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*



TABLE V. PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN WAGE EARNERS AS COMPARED WITH ALL WAGE EARNERS IN MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES (STATE OF NEW YORK)

(January 1942, October 1942, November 1943, November 1944)

Industry	January 1942	October 1942	November 1943	November 1944
Total manufacturing industries.....	27.8	31.9	37.0	37.8
Food and kindred products.....	28.8	34.4	36.0	36.3
Tobacco manufacture.....			72.7	70.9
Textile-mill products.....	46.9	50.0	50.6	51.1
Apparel and other finished fabric products.....	61.1	61.5	62.3	62.3
Lumber and timber basic products...	12.7	18.0	13.9	17.2
Furniture and finished lumber products.....			29.5	29.4
Paper and allied products.....	27.5	32.1	39.1	38.2
Printing, publishing and allied industries.....	20.1	24.2	27.5	26.4
Chemicals and allied products.....	17.6	22.1	34.2	34.6
Products of petroleum and coal.....			3.0	2.4
Rubber products.....	21.9	43.5	48.7	46.2
Leather and leather products.....	40.9	46.0	45.0	46.2
Stone, clay and glass products.....	16.9	25.7	37.6	38.0
Metals and machinery.....	8.6	15.6	25.9	25.6
Miscellaneous manufacturing industries.....	29.9	33.8	42.6	44.4

### Illinois

In the State of Illinois, women constituted a fourth of the labour force in March 1940, when 746,933 women were reported as employed and 107,343 as seeking work. Tentative estimates by the Illinois State Department of Labor indicate that in July 1944 approximately 1,246,000 women were employed, excluding 10,000 in military service. The number of unemployed had been reduced to 20,000-30,000. At that time, women accounted for 36 per cent. of the total number of employed workers in the State. In non-agricultural occupations, their proportion was nearly 40 per cent.; and the number of women thus employed increased by 64 per cent. from March 1940 to July 1944.<sup>1</sup>

#### INCREASE IN WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT IN SELECTED WAR INDUSTRIES

Most of the detailed statistical information dates from 1943 and the beginning of 1944; it is true, however, that the greatest influx of women workers into industry occurred during these years and that

<sup>1</sup> *Monthly Labor Review*, Dec. 1944, p. 1234.

a stupendous mass industry in an incredibly short time". While in December 1941 only a little over 4,000 women were working in aircraft manufacture, their number rose to more than 310,000 by June 1943, excluding some 100,000 who were reported in office and other non-factory work and an additional undetermined number working in contracting and subcontracting plants engaged in making aircraft parts. The proportion of female workers in the aircraft industry (excluding aircraft engines) rose from 1 per cent. in April 1941 to 39 per cent. in June 1943; in aircraft engines manufacture, the proportion of women workers increased from less than 1 per cent. to 28 per cent. during the same period. More recent figures are available for the airframe, engine and propeller plants, in which the proportion of women in the total employment increased from less than 5 per cent. at the time of Pearl Harbor, to 37 per cent. in November 1943. In June 1944, this branch of the aircraft industry was still employing some 439,500 women, in spite of a reduction of about 10 per cent. from November 1943, when the volume of employment reached its peak in the industry.<sup>1</sup>

### Shipbuilding

Women had long been employed on clerical work in the shipbuilding industry, but practically none was doing production work in the yards before 1941. The manpower shortage caused shipyards to engage and train women in increasing numbers for jobs customarily performed by male workers, particularly since the summer of 1942. In June 1942, only 0.4 per cent. of the wage earners in commercial yards were women; by April 1943, the proportion had risen to about 6 per cent., and in June 1943 to 8 per cent.<sup>2</sup>

### Transportation

In the transportation industry, the importance of the female labour force substantially increased on account of war circumstances, and women held many positions new to them. The railroad, local transit and airway branches of the transportation industry not only have admitted women to men's jobs, but in many instances have been actively recruiting them. In May 1943, about 195,000 women were engaged in the various branches of transportation, but the Office of Defense Transportation was seeking to have at

<sup>1</sup> *Monthly Labor Review*, Oct. 1943, pp. 658 and 726; Sept. 1944, pp. 475 and 477; Ethel ERICKSON: *Women's Employment in Aircraft Assembly Plants in 1942* (U.S. Women's Bureau, Bulletin No. 192-1, Washington, D.C., 1942), pp. 3-13.

<sup>2</sup> *Monthly Labor Review*, Oct. 1943, pp. 662 and 726.

figures relating to this period give an acceptable illustration of the situation at the peak of women's employment in war industry.

As regards manufacturing industries, women's employment increased chiefly in durable-goods manufacture. The distribution of female employment between non-durable and durable-goods manufacturing industries was greatly affected by wartime developments.

The relative importance of women in durable-goods manufacture showed little change until 1942; the percentage of women workers as compared to all wage earners in these industries varied between 8.6 per cent. in October 1939 and 8.9 in April 1942, but rose to 13.2 in October 1942 and reached 22.0 per cent. in June 1943. In the non-durable goods manufacturing industries, where women's employment has been extensive for a long time, the variations in the percentage of women compared to the total of wage earners showed the same trends as in the durable-goods manufacturing industries, but to a lesser extent. Thus, the percentage of women wage earners in this field of employment was 39.5 in October 1939 and 39.6 in April 1942, and increased to 41.4 in October 1942 and 44.2 in June 1943.<sup>1</sup>

As in the years preceding the war, the industry groups employing the largest proportion of women wage workers in June 1943 were those engaged in the manufacture of textile-mill products and other finished textile products (78.8 per cent. of all wage earners in the industry), tobacco (67.8 per cent.), textile (50.3 per cent.), leather and leather products (49.4 per cent.), and electrical machinery (46.1 per cent.). It seems though, that the apparel and tobacco industries had the smallest increases in the proportion of women from April 1942 to June 1943.<sup>2</sup>

War industries with large proportions of women among total wage earners (in June or August of 1943) were communications equipment, 51 per cent.; ammunition—for small arms, 47 per cent., and for artillery, 39 per cent.; electrical equipment, 40 per cent.; fire-control instruments, 39 per cent.; professional and scientific instruments, 37 per cent.; rubber products, 38 per cent.; and guns and mounts under 20 mm, 36 per cent.<sup>3</sup>

### *Aircraft Industry*

One of the most spectacular increases in women's employment occurred in the aircraft industry, which itself "has expanded into

<sup>1</sup> *Idem*, Oct. 1943, p. 725.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 726-727.

<sup>3</sup> Information communicated by the Women's Bureau.

least 300,000 female workers in the industry.<sup>1</sup> In railroads, which employ a larger number of women than any other transportation branch, women constituted, in May 1943, 6 per cent. of all employees; by mid-July, their proportion amounted to 7 per cent. of railroad employees.

In January 1944, some 106,000 women were employed by Class I steam railways (excluding switching and terminal companies), representing an increase of 67.6 per cent. over the January 1943 figure. The proportion of female employees (in all divisions reporting to the Bureau of Transport Economics and Statistics) rose during this period from 4.79 per cent. to 7.80 per cent. From January 1944 to April 1944 the number of female steam railway workers expanded to 112,063, or about 6 per cent. in these four months.<sup>2</sup>

### *Steel*

In the steel industry virtually all the large companies substituted women for men in an increasing number of jobs and were prepared to take them on in larger numbers as the manpower shortage became more acute. In the iron and steel industry as a whole, women constituted 18.5 per cent. of the total labour force in June 1943, compared with 6.8 per cent. in April 1941.<sup>3</sup>

### *Petroleum Refining*

In 1939 women represented less than 2 per cent. of all persons, and fewer than 0.4 per cent. of the wage earners, in the petroleum-refining industry; in April 1942, women accounted only for 1 per cent. In August 1943, a survey on the employment of women in this industry was reported. Based on the experience of 74 companies, accounting for about a quarter of the entire industry, this study shows that the proportion of women wage earners had reached the figure of the peak of the First World War, that is to say, 5 per cent. The hiring, at first rather slow, was so accelerated that an increase over the later figure was anticipated. If non-production workers are included, the proportion was reported to be about 10 per cent.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Idem*, Oct. 1943, p. 665; Sept. 1944, pp. 590-591; U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR: *Labor Information Bulletin*, Mar. 1943, p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Monthly Labor Review*, Oct. 1943, pp. 663, 726.

<sup>4</sup> *Idem*, Aug. 1943, p. 197; Oct. 1943, p. 728.

## CHANGES IN THE COMPOSITION OF THE FEMALE LABOUR FORCE

Even if the war had not broken out, the trend of women's employment was going upwards; war conditions have greatly accentuated this tendency. It was found that in April 1944 the actual participation of women of 14 years of age and over in the labour force was 21 per cent. in excess of "normal" expectations, whereas for men in the same age limits, it was only 9 per cent. This increase over the normal expectations varied widely with the various age groups.<sup>1</sup> Approximately half (3.3 million) of the abnormal wartime increase in the labour force was supplied from young persons in the 14-19 years age group. In April 1944, the actual participation of girls of 14-19 years of age was 86 per cent. in excess over normal expectations, with a 236 per cent. excess for the 14-17 years age group and 44 per cent. excess for the 18-19 years age group.<sup>2</sup>

The great majority of extra workers among adult women were over 35 years of age; this was largely because there are large numbers of married women in this age group who are normally outside the labour force and without responsibility for the care of young children and who took up employment during the war. Of some 13.6 million married women aged 35-64 outside the labour force in 1940, 75 per cent. (10.2 million) had no children under 10 years of age, compared with 31 per cent. (2.9 million) among married women aged 18-34.<sup>3</sup>

The employment of women under 35 years of age was also more extensive than it would have been under "normal" circumstances, but fewer additional workers were recruited from these age groups than from the younger or older age groups. Among women in the 20-24 years age group, the number of workers exceeded normal expectations by about 400,000 (15 per cent.) only, and in the 25-34 age group, there was a deviation of less than half of 1 per cent. (10,000) from the "normal".<sup>4</sup> Certain factors prevented a greater participation of women between 20 and 35 years of age in the labour force, namely, the general increase in the family income and dependency features of Selective Service regulations, and, more decisively, increases in marriage and birth rates. On the other hand, these conditions were balanced by the fact that a considerable number of young women married to servicemen took up employment. Thus approximately half of the women with husbands away

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<sup>1</sup> *Idem*, Aug. 1944, p. 276.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 272-276.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 277.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 272-276.

in the armed forces were in the labour force, as compared with less than one fifth of the other married women. Although the relatively young age distribution of service wives accounts partly for this difference, it was estimated that, even age for age, the proportion of workers among service wives was between two and three times the proportion among women with husbands present, and that this relationship held true for women with young children as well as for those without children. It was further stated:

If it were not for an abnormally high proportion of workers among service wives, the number of women aged 20-34 years in the wartime labour market would probably be below the "normal" based on pre-war trends. Since 1940, there has been a marked increase in the proportion of young women who are married and, in view of the rise in birth rates, this has no doubt been accompanied by a similar increase in the proportion with young children.

This statement was corroborated by statistical estimates. The proportion of workers among married women of the 20-24 age group was 17.3 per cent. in March 1940, and 27.1 per cent. in February 1944; among women in the 25-34 age group the corresponding figures were 18.1 and 23.6 per cent.<sup>1</sup>

Thus one feature of the increase of the female labour force was the expansion in the employment of married women. In the autumn of 1944 it was estimated that 23 per cent. of all married women were in the labour force or gainfully occupied—the highest level reached in the country—compared with 15.2 per cent. in 1940; the number of married women on the labour force increased by 2,900,000 between April 1940 and March 1944, representing nearly three fourths of the total influx of women workers.<sup>2</sup>

#### METHODS OF RECRUITMENT AND UTILISATION OF THE FEMALE LABOUR FORCE

In spite of the increasing proportion of women in the labour force during 1942, women had not been entering the labour market in sufficient numbers to offset the losses through men being taken by the armed forces. The success with which women, not then gainfully employed, could be persuaded to enter the national labour force determined to no small extent whether production could be maintained, and increased, where necessary, while the armed forces expanded to their goal of over 11 million.

The resistance of employers and trade unions to women's employment, although rapidly disappearing, constituted an obstacle to rapid recruitment of women workers in many areas and

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 273-274.

<sup>2</sup> *Labor Information Bulletin*, Nov. 1944, pp. 4-5.

industries.<sup>1</sup> Employers, like other individuals, found it necessary to weigh old values and old institutions, in terms of a world at war. Acute labour shortages, coupled with concrete proof of women's successful performance in a wide variety of occupations, served to overcome the doubts of some of the most reluctant employers concerning the adaptability, efficiency and endurance of women workers. In spite of some chilliness, many occupations and jobs traditionally reserved for "men only", in final desperation, opened their doors to women. In August 1943, however, the problem of utilisation of women in the war effort had shifted largely from that of convincing employers to that of overcoming women's inertia or reluctance to take wartime employment, but individual instances of continued refusal on the part of employers had still to be coped with.

### *Employment of Older Women*

Moreover, the general reluctance of employers to utilise older women remained serious. As already observed, older women still found it particularly difficult to obtain employment during the early stages of the labour shortage. The age distribution of employed women remained fairly stable until the spring of 1943, when about 55 per cent. were under 35 years of age and the proportion of women of 45 years and over had stayed at about 22-23 per cent.<sup>2</sup> According to estimates prepared jointly by the War Manpower Commission and the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the main source of labour supply to meet the critical labour shortage consisted of women who were occupied as home makers or were unoccupied; the most easily available of them were the 6,400,000 non-farm housewives under the age of 55 who were not responsible for the care of children under 14. It was to the group of middle-aged housewives that recruiting services looked primarily for additional workers in the following year. There were in April 1943 about 5,500,000 women from 35 to 54 years of age in the labour force, and about 12 million not in the labour force, that is, neither employed nor seeking employment. From 1940 to 1943, fewer than 800,000 women were recruited from this age group; this rate of recruitment had to be accelerated in the circumstances existing at that time.<sup>3</sup> The fact that less than one fifth of all older women in the country were employed in April 1943 indicated "poor utilisation of a very

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. *International Labour Review*, Vol. XLVII, No. 2, Feb. 1943, p. 233.

<sup>2</sup> Office of War Information, War Manpower Commission, press release of 28 June 1943.

<sup>3</sup> "Manpower Requirements for 1943-44", "Source of Labor Supply for the War", in *Monthly Labor Review*, Aug. 1943, pp. 204 and 213.

valuable source of labour supply", according to the Chairman of the War Manpower Commission. He urged that older women should be hired by employers in increasing numbers and that they should be given equal consideration with men for employment in all types of work.<sup>1</sup>

### *Part-Time Employment*

On the other hand, certain experienced personnel directors thought that practically all jobs could be cut down so that people could work part time and not only on unskilled labour jobs and work that requires little or no training. In fact, some employers were already using, early in 1943, part-time employment in war plants because of the depletion of the full-time worker supply. Part-time shifts in plants visited in the spring of 1943 by the Women's Bureau representatives followed three general patterns: (a) part-day shifts; (b) shifts of approximately full-day length but distributed over only a half-week or on alternate days; and (c) week-end shifts. Of these the short-hour shifts were by far the most common.<sup>2</sup>

Some plants, with long working weeks, arranged their hour schedules to allow women a full day off, at least on alternate weeks, in order to allow women to discharge pressing household duties relating to child care, marketing, laundry, and so on. In the course of a survey in 155 plants, chiefly in heavy industries, it was found in March 1943 that, although some plants had part-time shifts arranged for women, the half-shift system was not frequent, but plants were contemplating the use of this plan for jobs which required only a comparatively short period of training and where women did not have to travel long distances to work.<sup>3</sup> Such employment of women has much expanded, particularly in stores, restaurants, laundries, in clerical work, in agriculture, in service industries, and in food-processing industries. The sources of part-time workers are students, housewives, and certain classes of clerical workers who might be recruited through the United States Employment Service and with the help of community organisations, colleges, women's clubs, churches and so forth.

The advantages of part-time employment are manifold. Part-time work not only increases the total labour force and permits a

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<sup>1</sup> Office of War Information, War Manpower Commission, press release of 28 June 1943.

<sup>2</sup> WOMEN'S BUREAU: *Part-Time Employment of Women in Wartime* (Special Bulletin No. 13, June 1943); NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL CONFERENCE BOARD: *Wartime Pay of Women in Industry* (Studies on Personnel Policy, No. 58, Oct. 1943), p. 11.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

more complete utilisation of full-time workers, who can be replaced by two part-time workers on unskilled jobs and be upgraded to more highly specialised work; it also tends to decrease plant absenteeism, particularly in cases where part-time workers are used as a "relief force" which makes it possible to grant full-time workers regular hours or days off; and it permits re-employment of women with special training who left work on marriage and who would be unable or unwilling to undertake a full-time job. In addition, part-time work has proved particularly efficient in occupations which require a high degree of concentration or are unusually tiring.

At the time of the Women's Bureau survey, the need for part-time workers was greater in the service industries than in war plants, particularly in defence areas. Labour shortages in service industries were already causing serious inconvenience, and the number of women available for full-time work in these occupations was rapidly decreasing. Women able to take part-time work, however, were reluctant to take up work in service industries, and preferred to work in war plants. Appeals which were launched in many cities for part-time workers in trade and service industries gave unsatisfactory results and emphasis was laid on the essential importance of civilian service industries.

In the light of the findings of its survey and in view of the increasing use of part-time female workers, the Women's Bureau made basic recommendations on this question. Recruitment of part-time workers was recommended under the following conditions:

- (a) As a means of utilising the services of women not available for full-time jobs, in areas where there existed a shortage of women labour;
- (b) As a means of increasing production in place of extending the hours of regular women workers beyond 8 hours a day or 48 hours a week;
- (c) As a practical method of reducing absenteeism of full-time employees by the employment of women on a part-time "relief shift".

Recommendations regarding conditions of work were also set forth. They included the following measures:

- (a) Wage rates should be the same for full-time and part-time workers on comparable work;
- (b) Working conditions standards should be the same for full-time and part-time workers, and night work for part-time women workers was discouraged; beginning and ending hours of shifts should be adjusted to meet the needs of the women workers, especially those with children of school age;
- (c) Recruitment of women workers with pre-school age children was discouraged, as well as employment on a part-time basis of women who have full-time employment elsewhere, except in emergency situations;
- (d) Development of community facilities to meet the needs of employed women, including adequate provision for child care, laundering, marketing, shopping and other household duties.

Among the various plans which have been made by agencies and companies in order to alleviate the task of working mothers, the scheme worked out by the War Manpower Commission for its employees contained several features of part-time employment. This policy applied only to working mothers employed in the Commission's headquarters in Washington but all bureau and service directors and the headquarters' staff of the Commission were authorised to make adjustments and arrangements along the lines suggested by the following instructions concerning working mothers and, in certain cases, other employees:

(a) Short periods of annual leave—a few hours, a half day, or one or more days at reasonable intervals “for shopping and other household and personal business”;

(c) Change from full-time to part-time work in multiples of 6 hours with a minimum of 12 hours and a maximum of 36 hours. Part-time employees may not earn annual or sick leave and must use previously earned leave before the change;

(d) Granting of 12-day vacations even . . . when the employee is a part-time worker.<sup>1</sup>

### *Home Work*

Home work was used in several areas of acute labour shortage by war contractors as a method of drawing some labour reserves into the working force. But this policy was not approved by the Chairman of the War Manpower Commission, who sent a memorandum to the regional directors of the Commission, reminding them that industrial home work was prohibited on all contracts covered by federal laws, and in many States by State laws and regulations, and that the Commission would not consider giving any assistance or encouragement in recruitment for industrial homework, for which it was found impossible to enforce minimum standards of working conditions and to maintain productive efficiency. In view of the necessity of employing persons not available for regular factory jobs, he suggested an increasing use of part-time programmes and the development of community work shops.<sup>2</sup>

While the national problem of recruiting women was becoming more serious, the most difficult labour-supply problems were still local in character. Additional women workers were badly needed in the 77 areas of acute labour shortage in November 1943, and transfers of workers were already required in some areas.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Office of War Information, War Manpower Commission, press release, 6 June 1944.

<sup>2</sup> *Idem*, 30 Aug. 1943.

<sup>3</sup> *Idem*, 1 Nov. 1943.



### *Recruiting Campaigns*

Women workers were drawn into industrial employment mainly by recruiting campaigns. Until September 1943 the campaigns were conducted independently by local offices of the War Manpower Commission with success varying with the psychology of the communities and the already expressed reaction of the women when preliminary steps were inaugurated. At that time the War Manpower Commission decided, in collaboration with the Office of War Information, to intensify the recruiting campaigns through the radio, the press, films, etc., on a nation-wide basis, addressed, among other groups, to women not engaged in essential work.<sup>1</sup>

Intensive recruitment campaigns were launched, but in spite of this, the need was felt early in 1944 for more intensive planning and co-ordination of effort to effect greater employment of women in many localities, in view of the expected labour shortages in certain areas, while completion of contracts and other various circumstances were causing partial displacement of women in some areas and in some lines of employment, with the result that the need for woman labour was decreasing in certain areas, but remained as urgent or even more acute in the nation as a whole.<sup>2</sup>

The Women's Advisory Committee of the War Manpower Commission launched an appeal to all women's clubs and organisations asking their aid in recruiting women, especially in the areas of acute shortage, and in helping to overcome the difficulties in already overcrowded areas when transferred workers had to be accommodated; this action was to be co-ordinated with the efforts of the local offices of the U.S. Employment Offices and Government agencies.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Monthly Labor Review*, Nov. 1943, pp. 932 and 935.

<sup>2</sup> In Dec. 1943, the number of Group II areas (where labour shortage was expected to develop within six months) declined from 124 to 119, while the number of areas in which slight labour surpluses were expected to remain after six months increased from 102 to 112; by Jan. 1944, the number of Group I areas (those of current acute shortage) was slightly reduced from 69 to 67 (*Wage and Hour Reporter*, 10 Jan. 1944, p. 23).

<sup>3</sup> War Manpower Commission, press release, 16 Feb. 1944. The Women's Advisory Committee was appointed in Sept. 1942 by the Chairman of the War Manpower Commission, to advise the Commission on problems affecting women's employment during the war and particularly on effective mobilisation and utilisation of women for the war effort. The duties of the Committee included the making of recommendations to the War Manpower Commission for the establishment of policy. Its membership of 13 members is representative of management, labour and the general public as well as the North, South, East, Mid West and Far West parts of the country; it comprises women's organisations' leaders and women who otherwise have specialised in the solution of community problems, women prominent in the field of education and journalism, personnel specialists from large industries, and representatives of the American Federation of Labor, the Congress of Industrial Organizations and the National Farmers' Union. Three special subcommittees have been appointed by the Chairman of the Women's Advisory Committee, Miss Margaret Hickey, and deal respectively with community facilities and services, public relations and post-war planning. Cf. U.S. WAR MANPOWER COMMISSION: *History of the Women's Advisory Committee* (Revised) (mimeo. document, Feb. 1945).

At the same time an agreement was reached by the War Manpower Commission, the Navy Department, the War Department and the Office of War Information for the co-ordination of their efforts in the recruitment of women for the armed forces and essential civilian activities, and for their collaboration in allocating recruited women according to their skills. The U.S. Employment Service was empowered to direct eligible women to armed forces recruiting stations on the same basis as was used in directing them to essential war jobs.<sup>1</sup> Women working in essential activities who were not employed at their maximum skill, or who were not in essential occupations, or who could be replaced by other available workers, were to be referred by the War Manpower Commission (through the U.S. Employment Service) to the armed forces; women, who within 60 days after application for enlistment, were engaged or had been employed in essential activities, would not be enlisted in the armed forces, unless they secured a statement of availability from their employer or from the U.S. Employment Service, or were referred by the U.S. Employment Service to the armed forces.<sup>2</sup>

The War Manpower Commission reaffirmed in February 1944 the principles of its policy as regards the recruitment and allocation of womanpower, in accordance with local needs based on production demands. These principles were: (1) the expansion of employment opportunities for women; (2) "positive aggressive day-by-day recruitment" of women in areas where the demand for women workers could not be met by customary recruitment activities; and (3) stabilisation of the female work force by encouraging the establishment and/or expansion of in-plant and community services and facilities.

On the local level, several methods were adopted by the War Manpower Commission in order to increase the employment of women and to refer men to jobs which women could not fill: (1) the controlled referral of all male workers; establishments which could increase their proportion of women were encouraged to do so by being denied additional male workers; (2) ceilings on the employment of male workers, by restricting the number of male workers, so that men already employed in an establishment would consequently be fully utilised and, if necessary, transferred to jobs which women could not fill; (3) occupations reserved for women in a number of areas and no referral of men to job orders for these

<sup>1</sup> Essential activities included: (a) production and design of aircraft including air frames, engines and equipment; (b) shipbuilding, including technical equipment; (c) production of ordnance and accessories; (d) production and design of Signal Corps equipment; (e) technical research on war projects; (f) teaching of technical subjects involved in training for armed service and war projects; (g) agriculture; and (h) wire and radio communications.

<sup>2</sup> *Monthly Labor Review*, Apr. 1944, p. 749.

occupations; (4) use of War Manpower Commission analysis of working conditions and industrial processes already tried for the solution of in-plant problems; the utilisation studies could reveal the feasibility of using women in jobs which management considered unsuitable for them; and (5) use of manning tables which, in a concise and comprehensive way, could show the occupational composition of a plant and often indicate possibilities for introducing women in specific jobs they had not heretofore filled or for increasing their utilisation in occupations they already held in small proportions.<sup>1</sup>

### NEGRO WOMEN WORKERS

Among the developments in women's employment that the war emergency brought about, it seems apparent that a step forward was made as regards the employment of Negro women in industry, although the improvement of the conditions of employment of Negro women did not keep pace with the advance made as regards Negro men's or white women's employment.

The distribution of Negro employed women changed considerably during the war. The following tables give a statistical picture of the main wartime developments for the period between April 1940 and April 1944. As regards the occupational distribution of the Negro female population, domestic workers still constituted the largest group of Negro women workers, but their proportion to the total number of Negro women workers decreased slightly during this period, from 70.3 to 62.5 per cent., and a significant internal shift occurred: the proportion of those employed as domestic servants showed a marked decrease, while those engaged in the personal services, *e.g.*, beauticians, cooks, waitresses, etc., showed a corresponding increase. The proportion of female farm workers among all Negro employed women also decreased substantially, from 16.0 to 8.1 per cent.; their number declined by about 30 per cent. On the other hand, considerable strides were made as regards the employment of Negro women as industrial workers; their proportion to the total employed female Negro population rose from 6.5 to 18.0 per cent., and their number increased almost fourfold.<sup>2</sup> No significant changes occurred in any of the other major occupational groups. Percentage increases were large, but the actual numbers involved were very small, and made little difference in the occupational distribution of the employed Negro women.

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<sup>1</sup> WOMEN'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE, War Manpower Commission: *Woman-power, An Appraisal* (30 Apr. 1944).

<sup>2</sup> "War and Post-War Trends in Employment of Negroes", in *Monthly Labor Review*, Jan. 1945, pp. 1-5, tables 1 and 3.

TABLE VI. PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF NEGRO FEMALE  
POPULATION, BY OCCUPATION  
(April 1940-April 1944)

Occupation	April 1940	April 1944
Farm workers . . . . .	16.0	8.1
Farmers, farm managers . . . . .	3.0	2.9
Farm labourers . . . . .	13.0	5.2
Industrial workers . . . . .	6.5	18.0
Craftsmen, foremen . . . . .	.2	.7
Operatives . . . . .	6.3	17.3
Labourers . . . . .	.8	2.0
Service workers . . . . .	70.3	62.5
Domestic workers . . . . .	59.9	44.6
Protective service . . . . .	— <sup>1</sup>	— <sup>1</sup>
Personal and other services . . . . .	10.4	17.9
Clerical, sales people . . . . .	1.4	3.9
Proprietors, managers and professional workers	5.0	5.5
Total employed Negro females . . . . .	100.0	100.0

<sup>1</sup> Less than 0.05 per cent.

The changes in the industrial distribution of employed Negro women between April 1940 and April 1944, given in the following table, show also a marked decline in the proportion engaged in agriculture and a corresponding increase in the proportion in manufacturing, particularly in the "metals, chemicals and rubber" group. Also noteworthy is the decline in service activities and the increase in employment in trade.

TABLE VII. PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYED NEGRO  
WOMEN, BY INDUSTRY  
(April 1940-April 1944)

Industry	April 1940	April 1944
Agriculture . . . . .	16.1	8.1
Forestry and fishing . . . . .	— <sup>1</sup>	— <sup>1</sup>
Mining . . . . .	— <sup>1</sup>	— <sup>1</sup>
Construction . . . . .	.1	.1
Manufacturing . . . . .	3.2	13.4
Metals, chemicals, rubber . . . . .	.2	7.3
Food, clothing, textiles, leather . . . . .	1.8	3.9
All other manufacturing . . . . .	1.2	2.2
Transportation and communication, public utilities . . . . .	.2	1.1
Trade . . . . .	4.0	10.5
Finance, insurance and real estate . . . . .	.8	1.3
Business and repair service including auto . . . . .	.1	.1
Domestic and personal services . . . . .	68.6	54.4
Amusement, recreation . . . . .	.3	.4
Professional services . . . . .	6.1	7.5
Government . . . . .	.5	3.2
All employed Negro females . . . . .	100.0	100.0

<sup>1</sup> Less than 0.05 per cent.

The increase in the employment of Negro women can be illustrated by a few examples. While, in September 1942, there were fewer than 50 Negro women in war plants, in November 1943, 14,000 Negro women could be counted in the U.A.W.-C.I.O. plants, working as machine operators, assemblers, inspectors, sweepers, material handlers, stenographers and interviewers. In a few cases, Negro women workers made up from 8 to 35 per cent. of the female workers. One company began to hire one Negro woman out of every two women hired when it opened certain departments for women; at the end of 1943, 75 per cent. of the total woman labour force engaged by the company were Negro women.

Negro women were discriminated against in many war plants where female labour was accepted; it was only long after white women were widely employed in war plants that the prejudice against Negro women decreased. But Negro girls were employed in all the key war industries.

Negro women mostly did unskilled work, but a few of them did semi-skilled or even skilled or technical work in laboratories, as well as on production and inspection jobs. The National Urban League, which established an Industrial Relations Laboratory, conducted in 1944 a survey in 300 plants located in 25 States and 120 cities. Of those plants, 288 reported that they had increased the number of Negro workers in their employ during the war emergency and 85 per cent. declared that, on the basis of current experience, they would continue to use Negro workers.

The report stated that the "information furnished by these industries would indicate a fair chance of continued acceptance of Negro workers in all kinds of employment after the war, if we are able to maintain a high level of employment". But, as the Director of the Women's Bureau pointed out, war conditions accelerated some trends in the employment of Negro women: Negro women left domestic service not only for war production but also for non-war jobs essential to civilian life; the number of Negro women high-school and college graduates was much higher than in 1918, and they were equipped to meet the demands of war industries; and Negro women also participated more in trade union activity.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Information communicated by the Women's Bureau; see also Robert C. WEAVER: "The Employment of Negroes in United States War Industries", in *International Labour Review*, Vol. L, No. 2, Aug. 1944, pp. 141-159.

## CHAPTER II

### WOMEN IN INDUSTRY

#### TRAINING FOR INDUSTRY

The federal training programmes set up in 1940 to meet the war production demands of labour for semi-skilled, skilled, and technical personnel were opened generally to women. Total enrolment of women in public vocational and college war training programmes from 1 July 1940 to 31 March 1944, including 256,577 enrolled by the National Youth Administration (which was discontinued in 1943) was 2,461,943.<sup>1</sup> In addition to these facilities, courses were offered by private industries, colleges and universities, and were closely related to local needs for trained workers. The public war-training programmes were discontinued soon after the termination of the war.<sup>2</sup>

#### *Semi-Skilled and Skilled Workers—Upgrading*

The programme of vocational training for war production workers<sup>3</sup> included pre-employment and supplementary courses. The women were given training in various kinds of machine operations, welding, sheet-metal work, and inspection work; the scheme also offered courses in blue-print reading, and the use of measuring tools, and some courses gave elementary instruction in knowledge of metals. This kind of training which, at first, was given often in a 3 months' course, was much rationalised and accelerated. As soon as the trainee, progressing at her own rate of speed, was occupationally qualified in one single skilled job, she was referred to war employment. The greater number of women were enrolled in machine-shop practice, aircraft sheet-metal work; riveting, inspecting, and testing; and heavy electrical ship

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. *International Labour Review*, Vol. XLVII, No. 2, Feb. 1943, p. 233; Office of War Information, War Manpower Commission, press release, 12 May 1944.

<sup>2</sup> *Monthly Labor Review*, Sept. 1945, p. 514.

<sup>3</sup> *Education for Victory*, 1 Jan. 1943, p. 7; U.S. OFFICE OF EDUCATION: *Training Women War Production Workers: The Work of the Public Vocational Schools* (Aug. 1943), p. 3.

welding.<sup>1</sup> The War Manpower Commission reported a total of 1,136,676 enrolments of women under this scheme from 1 July 1940 to 31 March 1944. Of the total enrolments for vocational courses, the largest single number, 484,254, was in programmes providing training for occupations required in the production of aircraft; enrolment of women for machine-shop occupations totalled 198,871, and 115,054 for shipbuilding occupations.<sup>2</sup>

Because of increasing difficulty in obtaining employees, many private employers hired workers, sent them to the public vocational schools, and gave them a learner's wage during their training. In July 1943, it was estimated that more than 1,000 war contractors were already following this plan.<sup>3</sup>

Besides the courses organised by federal agencies, industrial companies conducted their own training of workers on the job. According to reports sent by 13 shipyards to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, giving detailed information concerning employment of women, most of the companies used a combination of the two types of training. For example, women who were able to pass a trade test after 40 hours of burning or 60 hours of welding in a national defence training school were taken into the yards as burner or welder trainees; shipfitter trainees and sheet-metal trainees were given on-the-job training by journeymen, and were required to take supplementary courses in a national defence training school; and in one yard, trainees, after an average of 6 days in a welding school, were put on the job, where they received additional training until they could qualify as journeymen welders, usually after one month.<sup>4</sup> In the courses financed by federal and local funds and conducted by a private ship company, 10 per cent. of the trainees in the July 1942 enrolment were women.<sup>5</sup>

In aircraft factories, many women with no experience or training were trained in the factory. They were paid during the training period, and, after completion of the course, were placed in job.<sup>6</sup>

Seventy-four petroleum refinery companies whose data concerning women's employment have been studied by the Division of Productivity and Technological Development of the Bureau of Labor Statistics developed various training schemes determined by the labour situation of each refinery. For example, one company,

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<sup>1</sup> *New York Times*, 23 Sept. 1943; Office of War Information, War Manpower Commission, press release, 12 May 1944.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Training Women War Production Workers: The Work of the Public Vocational Schools*, op. cit., p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> *Monthly Labor Review*, Feb. 1943, p. 277.

<sup>5</sup> Mary ANDERSON: *Women on the Labor-for-Victory Front* (mimeo. document, U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau, 20 Sept. 1942), p. 3.

<sup>6</sup> *Education for Victory*, 1 June 1943, p. 22.

in which employment of women increased substantially, drew up an extensive training programme, divided into three periods: (a) induction period (reduced, as a result of improved teaching methods, to 10 days or less instead of 4 weeks) during which women became acquainted with the general work routine, facilities and lay-out of the refinery and were paid the rates for common labourers; (b) training period (lasting 6 to 8 weeks) where women were instructed on jobs that they would eventually do, and were paid slightly higher rates; and (c) provisional employment period, during which women were assigned to their permanent refinery jobs; this period lasted one month and the women received the same rates as men for comparable work.<sup>1</sup>

A considerable effort was made for the upgrading of women workers. In 1943 alone, it was expected that 200,000 women would have to be upgraded to supervisory or technical positions according to ability. Opportunities were offered to women already employed who wanted to get higher skills. This training scheme included two features: (a) courses within the programme of Vocational Training for War Production Workers<sup>2</sup>; and (b) in-plant instruction for upgrading given by private firms under the Training Within Industry programme<sup>3</sup>, which helped factories with advisory service in advanced methods of procedure for job instruction.

### *Higher Technical Instruction*

The supply of technically trained women was very limited; before the war, women constituted less than 10 per cent. of the number of men listed on the National Roster of Scientific and Specialised Personnel. The necessity for scientific training became obvious in the early stages of the defence emergency. Courses on the college level giving instruction for technical assistant work and inspection were offered under the Engineering, Science, Management War Training programme, organised as early as 1940 by the United States Office of Education.<sup>4</sup> Under this scheme a large number of colleges (at least 220) and universities offered tuition-free short-term courses, nine tenths of which were part-time courses given outside work hours. The typical full-time courses included 400 to 800 hours of intensive class and laboratory work. The War Manpower Commission reported that, from 1 July 1940 to 31

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<sup>1</sup> *Monthly Labor Review*, Aug. 1943, p. 197.

<sup>2</sup> Office of War Information, War Manpower Commission, press release, 16 May 1943.

<sup>3</sup> *Monthly Labor Review*, Apr. 1943, p. 664; War Manpower Commission, press release, 12 May 1944.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *International Labour Review*, Vol. XLVII, No. 2, Feb. 1943, p. 233; *Education for Victory*, 1 Jan. 1942, p. 7; *Monthly Labor Review*, Jan. 1944, p. 107.



March 1944, 230,411 women enrolled in those courses; of these 19 per cent. were in engineering, drawing and similar subjects applicable to many types of war production jobs; the remainder were in such subjects as personnel and labour relations, inspection and testing, communications, engineering fundamentals, and industrial organisation and management.<sup>1</sup> Besides these courses, the E.S.M.W.T. established a qualifying course in mathematics, because the supply of persons having two or more years of training in mathematics, which is an indispensable prerequisite to college-level work in engineering, was rapidly diminishing.<sup>2</sup>

Various schemes of training programmes directed to intensive preparation in a single field of engineering for carefully selected college women were also offered by private companies. Students were paid all expenses and received a salary while in training. For instance, in 1943, the Purdue University set up a 10-months' intensive technical study (engineering mathematics, radio-manufacturing processes, radio and electronic circuits, electrical draughting, shop practices, radio theory). On graduation, the women were to be engaged by a major private radio company to work as radio technicians. One aircraft engineering corporation opened, when the shortage of men trainees became imminent, a course to women college graduates which formerly trained only men. The 6-month course was divided into three parts: (a) 9 weeks' training in the E.S.M.W.T. at the engineering department of Columbia University; (b) a 4-week course at a State aviation school, where trainees worked with shop mechanics and took special courses in various types of processes and principles of safety and factory house-keeping; (c) 3 months at one of the company's plants, where trainees got shop experience and class instruction. The apprentices spent one week in each department and finally one month for specialisation in one particular department.

A few other companies established in 1943 engineering courses in co-operation with universities or colleges: for example, the Curtiss Wright Corporation, which organised special courses in seven colleges for girls who had at least a year and a half of college studies. The girls learned in 50 weeks the fundamentals of two years of college work and afterwards went into the same type of jobs as college graduates and took one year of job training. The object of the company was to train 800 women to fill first job assignments so that men could be upgraded to more technical work.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Office of War Information, War Manpower Commission, press releases, 16 May 1943 and 12 May 1944.

<sup>2</sup> *Labor Information Bulletin*, Aug. 1943, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

Courses were opened for technical work and were designed to meet the war industry and Government demands in technical personnel. In the spring of 1943, the University of Michigan started a 12-month course in petroleum geology for field work in the discovery programmes of American oil companies, and a 14-week course for training engineering aids for the Army Ordnance Department.<sup>1</sup> Women who had taken the engineering drawing course at the University of California were employed in such technical work in the shipbuilding industry.<sup>2</sup> At the Cooper Union Engineering School (New York City) women were enabled to take abbreviated courses to fit them for specific jobs in industry. The regular course, which under accelerated wartime schedule required  $2\frac{2}{3}$  years, was divided into three blocks: fundamental sciences, basic engineering, and specialised engineering subjects. A certificate issued at the end of any of these blocks permitted students to enter industry before completing the full requirements for the Bachelor's degree. The Civil Aeronautics Administration conducted classes, in co-operation with the United States Weather Bureau, for training women aircraft pilots in meteorology; on graduation women could take examination to qualify as junior meteorologists.<sup>3</sup> The Civil Aeronautics Administration also established classes in its seven regional headquarters where selected women were trained as junior aircraft communicators in the Administration's traffic-control centres, or as junior traffic controllers in the Administration's airport towers. Women with 35 hours of flight experience were admitted to the Training School and trained to ferry planes and operate various types of engines<sup>4</sup>, as members of the W.A.S.P. serving with the Ferrying Division of the Air Transport Command.

The Army Air Force began in the summer of 1942 to ask for women who could qualify as instructors in radio. Women were expected to meet specified requirements; but if these were not fully met, they could take three months of intensive training and be accepted as junior instructors. The Russell Sage College initiated in August 1942 an 8-month emergency course in food administration for women seeking nutrition jobs where full dietetic training is not needed. Other universities, colleges, or institutes organised specialised courses in blue-printing, home economics, draughting, and so forth. Women were admitted to engineering courses in some universities, colleges, or institutes as early as the autumn of 1942.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>2</sup> *Women on the Labor-for-Victory Front, op. cit.*

<sup>3</sup> *Labor Information Bulletin*, Aug. 1943, p. 21.

<sup>4</sup> *Education for Victory*, 1 June 1943, p. 22.

<sup>5</sup> *Labor Information Bulletin*, Aug. 1943, p. 2.

*Instruction of Women Supervisors and Counsellors*

Courses in personnel management, industrial relations, and similar fields were given by numerous institutions throughout the United States under a Government-sponsored training programme designed to meet industry's needs in personnel supervision. These courses were open to women who were already employed or were immediately employable on completion of course. The Training within Industry service of the War Manpower Commission, where employees selected by the employers were given training as job instructors, gave special qualification to hundreds of women. Usually the women were chosen in proportion to the number of women workers in the production line.<sup>1</sup>

Some colleges offered courses for training women as industrial personnel counsellors. Simmons College conducted in 1943 a 2-week conference for women already appointed as personnel counsellors or in a similar capacity in war industry, who wanted to acquire additional training. It gave also a 6-week summer session for women with some experience affording a basis of preparation for the position of counsellor. The courses were set up after a survey of a number of typical war plants in several States, made to determine the need of such training.<sup>2</sup> The main topics of the programme were problems of nutrition, of medical and health programmes in industry, of plant cafeterias, of work clothing, of absenteeism, of recreational programmes, of children's day care and of industrial security.<sup>3</sup>

## TYPE OF WORK PERFORMED

During the war women were drawn into many industries not accustomed to employ women in large numbers, such as the machine-tool industry, where women represented only 1 per cent. of the labour force in April 1941, and accounted for 13 per cent. in June 1943.<sup>4</sup>

*Placement of Women in Factories*

The induction of such a great number of women into industry for work formerly barred to them was made possible for technical reasons, besides the tremendous need of labour felt in the war emergency: (a) the working environment was adjusted to women; (b) the jobs were broken down and diluted to simpler

<sup>1</sup> WOMEN'S BUREAU: *Women in Personnel and Industrial Relations Work in War Industries* (mimeo. document, Mar. 1943), pp. 16-17.

<sup>2</sup> *Education for Victory*, 2 Aug. 1943, p. 11.

<sup>3</sup> *Women's Work and Education*, Apr. 1943, p. 8.

<sup>4</sup> *Monthly Labor Review*, Oct. 1943, p. 726.

and more numerous operations; (c) technical and scientific improvements contributed to lessen the physical strength required by some jobs considered formerly as heavy; and (d) training methods were improved and intensive training was given to women so that they could qualify within a short time as semi-skilled workers.

In the United States, however, the process of dilution of work related to intensive rationalisation of work operations, as well as the use of technological improvements in order to save labour, has been a long-standing feature of industrial production. War demands merely accelerated, to a certain extent, the existing trend.

The large-scale introduction of women into factories, and the necessity of obtaining the highest output for war production accentuated many problems connected with the employment of "green" labour. In order to reduce inefficiency and turnover, careful attention was given in many plants to proper selection and placement of new workers, especially women. In June 1943, the Women's Bureau issued a summary of the efforts which were made in this direction, and gave basic principles for the selection of women for war industries, the qualifications of the persons responsible for such selection and the planning of procedures to be applied. From the experiments which were carried out, it appears that job analysis is the first step in the successful placement of women, since it reveals the skills required for the jobs, as well as the physical demands in terms of strength and posture and its exposure to hazards; job analysis serves also to indicate the engineering changes that not only make the work practicable for women, but also increases the operating efficiency of the job.

The various procedures which were used for selecting women for the different jobs generally included: (a) the elaboration of adequate application forms in order to obtain valuable information regarding the applicant; and (b) the planning of a series of interviews with the prospective worker, one of the most important steps, since it served three basic functions: securing information, giving information and establishing good relations with the employee. These functions were in a number of cases performed in a series of interviews. The preliminary interview was designed to eliminate persons not suitable for the job; in the selection interview the individual was tentatively matched with the job; and in the "departmental" interview (not so widely used), the department head made a final selection from a group of applicants chosen by the personnel department as qualified for the job. Some conclusions were also drawn from the experience on the use of employment tests (aptitude, trade and intelligence and temperament tests). As a rule, it was advised to consider tests as aids and not as sub-

stitutes for the procedures in a personnel selection programme. While recognising the value of tests, the Women's Bureau strongly stressed the importance of their being strictly adapted to fit the specific job, and of their being administered and interpreted by competent personnel.<sup>1</sup>

### *Occupational Distribution of Women*

An exhaustive study of the different types of jobs that women performed during the war would be difficult. It must suffice here to illustrate by typical instances what appear to be the major facts of the wartime developments of women's employment, namely, the striking increase of the women's labour force which was considered as a vital source of manpower supply, the introduction of women into occupations that were previously barred to them, the extension of their technical qualifications, whether as skilled workers or technicians, and the rapid disappearance, under the stress of necessity, of the prejudice against their employment.

It may be useful to reproduce in this connection the findings of a survey carried on by the Women's Bureau. In the following table are listed the typical operations in which women were employed in war production in 1943.

TABLE VIII. TYPICAL OPERATIONS PERFORMED BY WOMEN WORKERS IN WAR PRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

#### *I. Manipulative Skills:*

##### Operating machines

Drill presses—single and multiple spindle . . . . .	A
Milling machines—light and medium, and micro-machines . . . . .	A
Light turret-lathes and hand-screw machines . . . . .	B
Bench and watchmaker's lathes . . . . .	A
Grinding machines (surface, cylindrical, and internal) . . . . .	B
Gear-shaping, cutting and hobbing machines . . . . .	B
Light punch and forming presses . . . . .	A
Miscellaneous machines: profilers, shavers, nibblers, shapers, routers . . . . .	B
Automatic screw machines . . . . .	B
Woodworking machines: saws, sanders, shapers, profilers . . . . .	B
Nailing machines . . . . .	C
Power sewing machines . . . . .	A
Optical and ophthalmic glass grinding and polishing . . . . .	B
Burring, polishing, lapping, buffing, etc., on lathes, drill presses, polishing jacks, and other machines . . . . .	A

<sup>1</sup> A: Women used extensively.

B: Women used to some extent.

C: Women used only to a slight extent.

This list was published in mimeographed form by the U.S. Women's Bureau, in June 1943.

<sup>1</sup> U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, Women's Bureau: *Choosing Women for War Industry Jobs* (Special Bulletin, No. 12, Mar. 1943).

Hand-finishing machined parts by filing, burring, lapping . . . . .	A
Hand gluing (for example, of plywood parts) . . . . .	B
Sheet-metal forming and riveting . . . . .	A
Welding	
Acetylene and torch . . . . .	B
Electric arc . . . . .	A
Spot . . . . .	B
Soldering . . . . .	A
Electrical work—wiring and assembling parts, winding coils and armatures, soldering, taping, etc. . . . .	A
Assembly—all types of light, sub- and final assembly (often requiring the use of hand tools as pliers, mallets, screw drivers, files, electric drills, bench assembly machines, and riveting presses) . . . . .	A
Artillery-ammunition, loading (bag- and shell-loading, fuses, primers, etc.) . . . . .	A
Operations on bullets, cartridge cases, and primers in small-arms ammunition . . . . .	A
Servicing and repairing of planes at air depots (ground mechanics) . . . . .	A
Painting	
Spray-painting small parts and products . . . . .	B
Touch-up and hand-finishing . . . . .	A
Radium . . . . .	A
Stencilling, masking before painting, racking and unranking . . . . .	A
Shipfitters and loftsmen . . . . .	C
Helpers . . . . .	A
<i>II. Inspection:</i>	
Visual . . . . .	A
Gauge, micrometer or caliper (sometimes with blue-print reading) . . . . .	A
Calibrating . . . . .	B
Checking and testing raw materials, stock and salvage parts . . . . .	B
<i>III. Packing:</i>	
Labelling, etc. . . . .	A
<i>IV. Factory Service:</i>	
Production planning, routing and control . . . . .	B
Draughtsmen and tracers . . . . .	A
Factory clerks (timekeepers, stock-record clerks, etc.) . . . . .	A
Tool-crib and stockroom attendants and dispatchers . . . . .	A
Crane operators . . . . .	B
Guards . . . . .	B
Electric truck drivers, intra-plant loading and hauling . . . . .	B
<i>V. Supervising:</i>	
(Foreladies, leadwomen, group leaders) . . . . .	B
<i>VI. Training:</i>	
(In-plant) . . . . .	C
<i>VII. Personnel Relations:</i>	
Personnel administration (director, assistant director, assistant) . . . . .	B
Employment—interviewing and hiring . . . . .	B
Nursing . . . . .	A
Welfare . . . . .	A

In general, it may be said that the type of work for which women have been found best fitted is precision work requiring painstaking application, patience and dexterity. Jobs requiring the operation of large machines were also successfully carried out by women when proper conveyors, automatic checks or stops, or other mechanical aids were provided.

It may however be interesting to note some of the occupations which women have performed in industries particularly connected with the war effort.

#### *Aircraft Assembly.*

In the aircraft assembly industry women were engaged in a wide variety of jobs, including particularly machine operators (or drill-press, milling machine, turret-lathe, grinding machine, and others); burring and filing; sheet-metal and sub-assembly work (riveting, welding, splicing cables and swaging, electrical assembly, tubing); work in the fabric and covering department, which, was in many cases, the first to be opened to women; painting and doping; inspection; and storeroom and toolroom occupations. Women were also employed, although to a smaller extent, on heat treatment, anodising and plating, and final assembly operations.<sup>1</sup>

#### *Shipbuilding.*

The range of women's occupations widened also in the shipbuilding industry. Anticipating heavy Selective Service inroads on shipyards' manpower early in 1944, the U.S. Maritime Commission launched a nation-wide programme for providing adequate replacements, including a more intensive recruitment of women workers. The Commission recognised that in many yards women had been employed with highly satisfactory results in an ever-increasing number of classifications, and recommended that attention should be given to the employment of women in all possible classifications. The extent of women's employment varied from yard to yard; some of the shipyards controlled by the Maritime Commission had women on their payrolls to the extent of 25 per cent. of their personnel.<sup>2</sup> In a survey made by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics in November 1942 in 13 selected commercial shipyards, a complete list of occupations in which women were employed at that time was drawn. It included 41 different job classifications. The jobs, most frequently mentioned as performed

<sup>1</sup> Ethel ERICKSON: *Women's Employment in Aircraft Assembly Plants in 1942* (U.S. Women's Bureau, Bulletin No. 192-1, Washington, D.C., 1942), pp. 3-13.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Maritime Commission, press release, 16 Dec. 1943.

by women were welders (off-ways) (13 shipyards reporting); drill-press operators and welders (horizontal, vertical) (10 shipyards reporting); burners, sheet-metal workers and welders (tack) (9 shipyards reporting); grinders and welders (overhead) (8 shipyards reporting).<sup>1</sup>

### *Transportation.*

In the transportation industry, substantial changes occurred during the war in the employment of women. The following table gives the distribution and proportion of women employees compared to the total of employees in the major occupational groups in January 1943 and 1944. It shows clearly that women made up a large proportion of the professional, clerical and general occupational group, but their employment increased considerably in the maintenance of equipment and stores, and also in transportation (other than train, engine and yard) and in transportation (engine and train).<sup>2</sup>

TABLE IX. FEMALES EMPLOYED ON CLASS I STEAM RAILWAYS  
(January 1943 and January 1944)

Occupational group	Number	Per cent. of total in occupational group	Year
Executives, officials, staff assistants....	18	.13	1944
	18	.13	1943
Professional, clerical, and general.....	70,379	31.35	1944
	48,138	22.90	1943
Maintenance of ways and structures...	2,402	1.04	1944
	745	.35	1943
Maintenance of equipment and stores..	21,545	5.83	1944
	9,439	2.76	1943
Transportation (other than train, engine and yard).....	11,273	7.13	1944
	4,843	3.27	1943
Transportation (train and engine)....	250	.29	1944
	4	.04	1943
Transportation (yard masters, switch-tenders and hostlers).....	34	.73	1944
	—	—	1943

In railroad companies, in general, great numbers of women are in office jobs, but during the war they also worked on the repair and maintenance of equipment, in round houses, as track walkers, section hands, foremen, brakemen, conductors, waiters, train dispatchers, station agents, telegraphers, etc.

<sup>1</sup> *Monthly Labor Review*, Feb. 1943, p. 278.

<sup>2</sup> *Labor Information Bulletin*, Mar. 1943, p. 8; *Monthly Labor Review*, Oct. 1943, p. 665; Sept. 1944, pp. 590-591.



In air transportation, a striking example of the increase in women's employment is given by a national airline, which, in 1940, employed women only in office work, and as early as 1942 had engaged women in practically every department, where they made up about one sixth of the maintenance and operations workers and one third of the other employees, including pilots and technical workers as well as hostesses and ticket sellers. In 1943, at least 11 large cities had begun employing women as bus operators and street-car operators and conductors.<sup>1</sup>

### *Steel Mills.*

In steel mills women were engaged mostly in labour jobs, but they were also placed in occupations requiring a considerable degree of skill; they were found as crane operators and core makers; and they were employed in nail and wire drawing, and running various kinds of machines in the maintenance shops.<sup>2</sup>

### *Foundries.*

During the second half of 1943, a survey was made in eastern and middle-western foundries of the work of women in the foundries themselves, excluding separate machine-tools divisions, office, maintenance and service departments.<sup>3</sup> Women in appreciable numbers were employed in the administrative offices and in plant clerical work; a few were in maintenance and service departments, though as recently as 1942 and 1941 the firms employed practically no women in any capacity. Of a total of 22,622 workers in the foundries (excluding all clerical workers) 3,631 were women, or 16 per cent. The percentage of women in these various foundries ranged from 1.6 per cent. to 43.4 per cent. The proportion of women seemed to depend largely on such factors as the shortage of male workers in the labour market, the size of the castings that were made, and the extent to which the foundry was engaged in war production work. Women were employed in most departments, but a large proportion of the jobs, even of the skilled jobs, involved physical exertion, heavy lifting and hard labour. The study concluded "that women, even if they wished to remain in the foundry work after the war, would have little or no opportunity to acquire the higher skills or advance up the job-progression ladder". Some firms mentioned jobs on which women excelled, such as sand-

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<sup>1</sup> *Labor Information Bulletin*, Mar. 1943, p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> *Monthly Labor Review*, Oct. 1943, pp. 663 and 726.

<sup>3</sup> Frances E. P. HARNISH: *Women's Employment in Foundries, 1943* (U.S. Women's Bureau, Bulletin No. 192-7, 1944).

testing, operation of the heat-treat furnaces, and particularly the making of small cores (at which some firms agreed that women were sometimes better than men), besides clerical work, draughting and laboratory work to which they were assigned in the plants.

### *Surface Mining.*

A few women were employed in various types of surface-mining jobs—some of which were opened to them after the beginning of the war emergency in mines producing coal, copper, iron, silver and gold—such as work in the coal mines shops, and picking of slate in mine tipples. In the non-ferrous metal mining industry they were hired to tend conveyors from the mill crushers, or to operate trippers (carts distributing ore to the bins); they were also used to regrade ore and some were working in mine lamp-houses, repairing and maintaining miners' electric lamps. Women were employed as laboratory technicians testing iron-ore samples.<sup>1</sup>

### *Petroleum Refining.*

Women were employed in a wide range of jobs in petroleum-refining industries. Office workers formed 44 per cent. of the total of women employed; refining operations, 33 per cent., laboratory, 18 per cent., and maintenance and others, 5 per cent. The largest numbers were stenographers, general clerks, general labourers, and laboratory testers. In refinery operations, jobs had in many cases been reorganised to be performed satisfactorily by women, who frequently replaced men on an equal numerical basis. In some instances, as a consequence of grouping fewer duties into individual jobs, the ratio of women to men ranged from 3:2 to 2:1; in others, the introduction of labour-saving machinery made possible the employment of fewer women than men to do a similar job.<sup>2</sup>

### *Female Technical Personnel*

The development of war production and the enrolment of men in the armed forces left gaps in the technical personnel. Women, as far as they were available and trained, replaced men in technical posts, and efforts were made to recruit women for training. A survey of the employment market for college graduating classes in 1943, which covered 128 universities<sup>3</sup>, indicated that, as a rule,

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<sup>1</sup> *Monthly Labor Review*, Oct. 1943, p. 663.

<sup>2</sup> *Idem*, Aug. 1943, p. 197; Oct. 1943, p. 728.

<sup>3</sup> NORTH WESTERN NATIONAL LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY, Family Economics Bureau: *Women Dominate Employment Market for College Graduates for 1943* (27 May 1943).

women were accepted instead of men in most technical positions, and in some regions most companies were seeking women instead of men. A Kentucky commercial college reported that demands for women were almost twice as many as for men graduates. Women were wanted chiefly for engineering work, and demands for women with a scientific background had increased greatly since the beginning of the war. Women were in demand also for all types of commercial jobs, and public and industrial accounting, where few women had formerly been engaged. As the demand for women college graduates in certain fields was much greater than the supply, many universities were encouraging a larger enrolment of women, and some that did not admit women in engineering or other technical departments were then opening these classes to women.<sup>1</sup> Several universities noted that married alumnae were applying for and securing employment to a much greater extent than before.

#### CONDITIONS OF WORK

War requirements, which imposed a great strain upon production and caused a great influx of women into industry, brought about substantial changes in the conditions of work of women.

The length of the working time was extended for all workers. In the case of women, for whom hours of work are regulated in a great number of States, the regulations were often suspended or relaxed. In order to prevent excesses, especially when hours of work were not regulated at all, and at the same time in order to obtain a maximum output from employed women, official agencies established wartime standards. The extent to which working hours were lengthened is illustrated in this chapter by some statistical data and results from sample surveys.

War conditions had remarkable repercussions on women's earnings. Among the factors which contributed to the substantial increase in women's wages, the increase in the number of hours of work for women must undoubtedly be mentioned. But in spite of the relatively longer hours of work for men, women's wages have increased to a greater extent than men's. Two other factors have also to be considered to account for this increase in women's wages and earnings. One is the fact that the principle of equal pay for equal work made substantial headway during the war, and that women, as has been seen, especially in war industries, replaced men on their jobs or were engaged in new occupations similar to those usually taken up by men; and that women's employment expanded considerably in well-paid war industries such

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<sup>1</sup> See p. 189.

as the aircraft, shipbuilding and metal industries, and this also favourably affected the average of women's wages. The other factor is that in occupations where women's participation is normally high, such as office work or service industries, women's wages have been on the increase, although to a much smaller degree, chiefly as a result of the labour shortage and the great number of unsatisfied demands for workers.

### *Hours of Work*

#### *Relaxation of Hour Standards.*

War production needs caused many States to relax their hours-of-work standards concerning women's work, as an emergency measure. A study, made by the Division of Labor Standards of the Department of Labor, of State reports covering the period from Pearl Harbor to 1 December 1942, indicated that the States encouraged employers to return to legal hours standards as quickly as possible. Following the first rush into war production, there was a great demand for broad exemption from labour standards, and numerous demands for a 7-day work week for both men and women. Such was the case in New York State, but the State soon refused to permit a regular 7-day week and required that no employee should work more than six 7-day weeks in a 6-months' period, or that one day of rest should be given after every 13 days of work. As long hours of work proved inefficient from the point of view of production, employers put their plants on a 24-hour basis instead of requiring excessive hours of work from their employees. State reports showed that during 1942 there was an increase in requests for permits to employ women in night work on the third shift, and a decline in requests for permits for longer hours.<sup>1</sup>

Typical legislative action was taken in New York State. The War Emergency Act gave the Industrial Commissioner power to grant specified temporary dispensation from labour laws upon application and further investigation of each case in war industries (amended in 1943 to include other essential industries).<sup>2</sup> During 1942, 1,276 plants received such dispensation concerning hours of work of women in factories, or renewals of previous favourable decisions.<sup>3</sup> Women's employment for over 48 hours a week, or on night shifts after 10 p.m., or to work longer daily hours, or any combination of these, was authorised. In November 1942, 367

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<sup>1</sup> *Wage and Hour Reporter*, 26 Apr. 1943, p. 394.

<sup>2</sup> *International Labour Review*, Vol. XLV, No. 5, May 1942, p. 568.

<sup>3</sup> *Annual Report of the War Emergency Committee* (Department of Labor, New York State, Jan. 1943), p. 4.

factories had received dispensation from labour laws. About two thirds were given permission for employment of women on multiple shifts, which meant that many women were working on the night shifts. Longer work weeks were permitted in 135 factories employing women on a single shift; in nine tenths of the cases up to 54 hours weekly were allowed.<sup>1</sup> In 1942, 12 per cent. of all applications for dispensation were rejected for various reasons, chief of which were that the plants were not working on war production or were not engaged sufficiently in war production, that there was still additional labour which could be hired, and that relaxation from labour laws would endanger the life and welfare of workers (especially requests for 7 continuous working days).<sup>2</sup>

In 1943, State legislation showed an accentuation of the trend towards according broad relaxation of hours standards; 20 States and the District of Columbia took some such legislative measures (Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont and Wyoming).<sup>3</sup> Here are a few instances. In North Dakota, hours of work for women in all industries were extended to 10 hours a day and 54 a week, for the duration of the war; women in executive, administrative, supervisory, and professional capacities were exempted from the hour law. In Ohio, until April 1945 or the end of the emergency, the maximum work week was extended to 50 hours, instead of the former 48, and the work day extended to 10 hours instead of 8; the period between two working days was limited to 9 hours instead of 10. In Texas, companies were granted permission to extend hours of work up to 70 a week, 10 a day (compared with the previous legal maximum of a 9-hour day and a 54-hour week), with overtime at double-time rates for a period of 30 days, subject to extension for women not covered by federal laws (Fair Labor Standards Act, Walsh-Healey Act, and Davis-Bacon Act). In Vermont, women employed in manufacturing and mechanical establishments might be required to work a 10-hour day and a 60-hour week, instead of a 9-hour day and 50-hour week, within a period not to exceed 10 consecutive weeks, upon notice in advance given to the Commissioner of Industrial Relations. Other amendments gave special war powers to the commissioners of labour for granting exemptions of various existing laws (Illinois and Massachusetts,

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<sup>1</sup> *Labor Information Bulletin*, Mar. 1943, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Annual Report of the War Emergency Committee*, *op. cit.*

<sup>3</sup> *Wage and Hour Reporter*, 20 Sept. 1943, p. 910.

for example). In Arkansas, permanent changes were made in standards, and in Indiana, labour laws were suspended.<sup>1</sup>

As from 28 February 1943 the War Manpower Commission, putting into effect an Executive Order of the President establishing the 48-hour week, designated 77 local labour-shortage areas and several industries as subject to the provisions of the Presidential Order. These provisions applied to all workers, irrespective of sex.<sup>2</sup>

*Number of Hours Actually Worked by Women in Industry.*

The increase in the number of working hours affected male and female workers. In view of the importance of the number of working hours, and especially of the time worked at overtime rates, on the earnings of women workers, the average hours worked by women wage earners in selected manufacturing industries are given for August 1944, and are compared with the figures of September 1941. They are compiled from the National Industrial Conference Board's regular monthly surveys of labour statistics in 25 manufacturing industries.

In September 1941 the average weekly hours were 38.1 per female wage earner and 42.2 per male wage earner; by August 1944, the corresponding figures were 41.2 and 47.0. While in September 1941 the average weekly hours were less than 40 for female wage earners in 13 manufacturing industries, there were in August 1944 only 4 manufacturing industries for which the average weekly hours for women were less than 40. As was to be expected, the longest average weekly hours worked by women in August 1944 were in manufacturing industries more directly connected with the war and the production of supplies for the armed forces, such as agricultural implement, shipbuilding, foundries and machine shops, meat packing and electrical manufacturing. In the furniture industry the average weekly hours were then 45.3.

Detailed data regarding the months of September 1941 and August 1944 are given in the following table. Seasonal variations might slightly affect the comparability of the figures of these two months, but the extent of the increase in the average working time of women wage earners, even with this correction, is clearly shown by these available data.

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>2</sup> *Monthly Labor Review*, Apr. 1943, p. 666; Office of War Information, War Manpower Commission, press release, 1 Nov. 1943.

TABLE X. AVERAGE HOURS PER WEEK PER WOMAN WAGE EARNER  
IN SELECTED MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES(September 1941-August 1944)<sup>1</sup>

Industry	September 1941	August 1944
Agricultural implement.....	39.8	44.8
Automobile.....	36.5	42.5
Boot and shoe.....	35.6	39.6
Chemical.....	40.2	42.4
Rayon producing.....	38.8	38.2
Cotton (North).....	38.7	40.5
Electrical manufacturing.....	40.2	43.2
Furniture <sup>2</sup> .....	40.4	45.3
Hosiery and knit goods.....	36.7	40.1
Iron and steel.....	—	42.8
Leather, tanning and finishing.....	39.8	39.8
Meat packing.....	37.8	43.3
Paper products.....	39.7	41.0
Printing, book and job.....	41.0	42.0
Rubber.....	37.2	42.6
Silk and rayon.....	35.8	39.8
Wool.....	37.6	40.4
Foundries and machine shops.....	41.5	43.3
Foundries.....	38.7	41.8
Machines and machine tools.....	43.1	43.5
Hardware and small parts.....	41.4	42.2
Aircraft.....	—	42.9
Shipbuilding.....	—	44.5

<sup>1</sup> NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL CONFERENCE BOARD: *Economic Record*, 11 Dec. 1941, p. 523; and *Management Record*, Oct. 1944, p. 299.

<sup>2</sup> Includes wood, metal and upholstered household and office furniture.

Surveys on hours of work were made in the course of 1942 and 1943 by federal and State agencies as well as private organisations. Some of them give a sample view of the actual number of hours worked by women, especially in war industries.

An enquiry was conducted in March 1943 by the National Industrial Conference Board and covered 155 plants, chiefly in heavy industries, such as machines and tools and metal products, which normally do not employ a large proportion of women, but which, on account of war circumstances, were compelled to engage women in replacement of male workers, or used women on new operations of a character comparable to that of jobs formerly performed by men. Women were found working normally 48 hours a week in nearly 55 per cent. of these plants, from 40 to 47 hours in approximately 30 per cent. of the plants, and from 49 to 60 (one plant) in 15 per cent. of the plants. Of the 155 plants surveyed, 112 were operating under a three-shift plan; women were working on the third shift (night shift) in 85 of these plants. The length of the shift was usually 8 hours, but in some cases the first and second shifts were a little longer than 8 hours, leaving a shorter period for the third shift (7 to 7½ hours). Women worked the same shifts as men, but all plants endeavoured to avoid a change of shift in the

early morning hours (between 1 and 5 a.m.) when transportation presents special difficulties. The lunch period in all three shifts was generally 30 minutes. Two plants had a 45-minute lunch period, and two others allowed an hour for lunch on the first shift, but cases of lunch periods of less than 30 minutes (15 minutes and 20 minutes) were more frequently found.<sup>1</sup>

Of 60 plants in five important war industries (aircraft assembly, artillery ammunition, small-arms ammunition, cannon and small arms, and machine tools) which reported at the beginning of 1943 on hours, shifts and rest periods of women workers to agents of the Women's Bureau, two thirds employed women on two shifts and one third on three shifts. In the plants visited, more than one half with two and three shifts provided no rotation, in about one fifth changes were made weekly, and in the remainder bi-weekly or monthly. In most cases hours were the same on the second and third shifts as on the first. Eight hours of work for the first shift was reported by more than one half of the plants, but hours ranged from  $7\frac{1}{2}$  and  $7\frac{2}{3}$  (in more than one third) to 9, 10 and even 11 hours in a few instances. More than half the plants reported a 48-hour week, and one fifth a 45-hour week, but the range was from a case of less than 40 hours up to 55 hours. Thirty minutes for lunch was given in most plants. Rest periods during the work, especially repetitive work, were granted in not quite half the plants; usually they were of 10 minutes twice a day.<sup>2</sup>

In New Jersey a comprehensive study was made, during the summer of 1942, chiefly on old-line plants that were devoting from one half to the whole of their production to war materials. In more than half the plants women worked on two shifts and in about one fifth they worked on three. In nearly all plants hours were the same for all shifts. In almost one half of those in which women worked on more than one shift there was no rotation of shifts; in the others a change every week was most common. Shifts usually were of 8 hours, but longer shifts were reported by one fourth of the plants; one eighth had a 10-hour day. A week of more than 40 hours for the first shift was reported by two thirds of the plants, and a week of more than 48 hours by nearly one fourth; the longest week was 54 hours. Adequate rest and meal periods were less generally reported than in the war-plants survey.<sup>3</sup>

In the autumn of 1942 a survey made by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (United States Department of Labor) in 14 plants of the aircraft-propeller industry, which covered virtually the entire

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<sup>1</sup> *Wartime Pay of Women in Industry*, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-16.

<sup>2</sup> *Labor Information Bulletin*, Mar. 1943, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*



industry, showed that operation of three full shifts was the practice in all plants, and that women were employed on all of them, distributed as follows: 48 per cent. on the first shift, 36 per cent. on the second, and 16 per cent. on the third. Of the total number of male workers employed at the time of the survey, 44.8 per cent. worked on the first (day) shift, 31.8 per cent. on the second or evening shift, and 23.4 per cent. on the third shift. It is interesting to note the relative popularity of the evening shift among women workers.<sup>1</sup>

*Official Policy regarding Women's Hours of Work.*

Because of the growing practice of setting aside in the war emergency the State hour standards governing the employment of women, a conference on the employment of women in wartime was called by the Secretary of Labor in Washington on 11-12 March 1943. Two resolutions were unanimously adopted by the conference, emphasising the standards that should be maintained in industry. They may be summarised as follows. The first resolution dealt with women's work in war production industries, and endorsed the preservation of State laws and regulations that establish, as regards hours of work, the following basic principles, which should be relaxed only where modification is necessary for the war emergency to ensure maximum production: (a) a maximum of 48 hours a week; (b) an 8-hour day; (c) one day's rest in seven; (d) adequate rest and meal periods; and (e) adaptation of hours of work and working conditions to the age and sex of workers (with the exception that there must be no relaxation or modification of standards governing minors under 16).<sup>2</sup>

The hour standards recommended ((a) to (d)) are similar to those set forth in a statement by the United States Secretary of Labor at the end of January 1942.<sup>3</sup> A comparable policy was also formulated by the War, Navy, Commerce and Labor Departments, the Maritime and War Manpower Commissions, the War Production Board, and the Public Health Service in recommendations made in July 1942<sup>4</sup> to contractors working on war production, to field representatives of procurement agencies, and to Government agencies. The same standards were endorsed in the statement of the Government's policy on women made by the Chairman of the War Manpower Commission, and based on recommendations

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<sup>1</sup> *Monthly Labor Review*, Apr. 1943, p. 751.

<sup>2</sup> *Idem*, June 1943, p. 1120.

<sup>3</sup> *International Labour Review*, Vol. XLV, No. 5, May 1942, p. 568.

<sup>4</sup> *Recommendations on Hours of Work for Maximum Production* (Office of War Information, 28 July 1942).

from the Women's Advisory Committee of the War Manpower Commission in October 1942.<sup>1</sup>

The second resolution of the March 1943 conference dealt with employment in civilian industries and recommended that standards of hours and conditions of work: (a) should not be relaxed in civilian industries not absolutely essential to the general well-being in time of war; (b) if relaxation was granted in industries providing basic subsistence needs, it should be granted only in areas of critical labour shortage; and (c) even in such areas it should be allowed only to meet basic minimum subsistence needs, and definite standards should be established for determining the need of relaxation.

Many women were employed on the night shift during the war to comply with demands for speeding up war production, although night work has long been recognised, both by employers and by workers, as wholly undesirable. The Women's Bureau recommended, in a special pamphlet, measures for reducing the dangers of night work. Their recommendations include:

(a) Careful selection of night workers, with work on the night shift forbidden to employees who have an anaemia, respiratory or digestive disease, or nervous disorder; to women with household responsibilities (except in case of limited emergency); and to young girls;

(b) Provision of good working conditions (well-trained supervisors, time and facilities for a hot meal, week-end rest, health supervision, good lighting, transportation facilities);

(c) Work at night should be paid at higher rate;

(d) Night workers should have seven to eight hours of sleep, nutritious food, exercise in the open air, and should report health disturbances to plant medical department;

(e) Rotation of shifts, the practice in many plants, should neither be too frequent—medical authorities agreeing on the disadvantage of change in shift every one, two or three weeks, which causes excessive fatigue and lowers the workers' efficiency—nor at intervals so long as to develop chronic fatigue among the night workers, continuous night work having proved, as already stated, totally disadvantageous.<sup>2</sup>

### *Wages in Wartime*

#### *Trends in Women's Earnings.*

There is no doubt that women's wages increased during the war, absolutely as well as relatively to men's wages. But it must be borne in mind that this trend existed already before the war—in fact, since the early twenties.

<sup>1</sup> *International Labour Review*, Vol. XLVII, No. 2, Feb. 1943, p. 233.

<sup>2</sup> *Night Work for Women and Shift Rotation in War Plants* (Women's Bureau, Special Bulletin No. 6, June 1942).

A general study of women's war wages made in the State of New York could be considered as giving a fairly representative view of the general trends of women's wages in industry during the war; but it must be noted that, in this State, the aircraft and shipbuilding industries, which women entered in great numbers and in which they secured equal pay for equal work, and other new occupations relatively highly paid were not represented. In all manufacturing industries, women's average weekly wages rose from \$17.46 in 1939, to \$19.74 in 1941 and reached \$34.50 in November 1944. Corresponding figures for men were \$30.77, \$36.60 and \$57.70. The reasons given for the rapid and general increase in women's wages were the tightening labour market, longer hours of work paid at overtime rates and night shifts with special bonus payments, factors which also affected men's wages. Another fact has also to be taken into account, especially after 1942: women were substituted for men in a steadily widening variety of more skilled, difficult or disagreeable jobs. As regards the manufacturing industries, the highest average wages paid to women were found in war industries, such as metals and machinery (including electrical machinery) and rubber, or in a highly organised field such as the apparel industry, particularly the women's and misses' outerwear industry. Wages in the canning and preserving industries were still the lowest in August 1944.<sup>1</sup> The following table gives men's and women's weekly earnings in some manufacturing industries in 1941 and in November 1944. These industries are selected because they employed large numbers of women.

These trends were corroborated by the findings of a periodical nation-wide survey carried out by the National Industrial Conference Board in 25 manufacturing industries.

In October 1941, the average hourly earnings of female wage earners for all these industries was \$0.561, and \$0.908 for male wage earners. By August 1944, the corresponding figures were \$0.757 and \$1.166. Average weekly earnings were \$21.37 for female wage earners and \$38.37 for male wage earners; in August 1944, these earnings had risen to \$31.31 and \$54.78 respectively.<sup>2</sup>

Of the manufacturing industries included in the survey, the highest average hourly earnings given for October 1941 were in the automobile, agricultural implement, electrical manufacturing and rubber industries. In August 1944 the automobile industry

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<sup>1</sup> DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, Division of Women in Industry and Minimum Wage, New York State: *Women's War Wages* (Dec. 1943); *Industrial Bulletin and Employment Review*, Nov.-Dec. 1944, p. 362.

<sup>2</sup> Aircraft and shipbuilding are not included for the calculation of these averages.

TABLE XI. AVERAGE WEEKLY EARNINGS OF MEN AND WOMEN IN  
SELECTED MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES IN THE STATE  
OF NEW YORK

(1941-November 1944)

Industry	Average for 1941 <sup>1</sup>		November 1944 <sup>2</sup>	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Total, manufacturing industries	36.60	19.74	57.70	34.50
Food and kindred products.....	34.07	17.45 <sup>3</sup>	48.12	26.99
Canning and preserving.....	23.73	13.29	36.40	23.36
Bakery products.....	32.39	20.49	45.00	27.54
Confectionery products.....	31.04	17.19	49.53	29.36
Tobacco manufactures.....	—	—	35.24	27.56
Textile-mill products.....	26.68	17.37	42.17	27.96
Knitting mills.....	24.68	16.66	40.23	25.61
Apparel and other finished fabric products.....	35.50	20.62	64.17	36.20
Men's and boys' suits, coats and overcoats.....	33.79	20.18	52.92	33.07
Men's and boys' furnishings, work clothing, etc.....	30.24	17.19	46.56	27.70
Women's and misses' outerwear.....	40.52	23.65	70.87	41.63
Women's undergarments and accessories.....	31.33	18.61	46.95	29.11
Millinery.....	38.08	22.44	66.34	35.27
Paper-board containers and boxes.....	30.96	18.09	47.28	26.55
Other paper products.....	31.91	17.00	46.00	26.23
Printing, publishing and allied industries.....	43.40	19.33	60.99	28.53
Chemicals, allied products.....	—	—	52.78	28.30
Rubber products.....	—	—	53.08	34.48
Footwear except rubber.....	26.94	17.95	46.53	29.79
Metals and machinery.....	39.11	21.66	61.39	40.76
Machinery (including electrical).....	41.24	24.34	57.00	37.05

<sup>1</sup> *Women's War Wages*, op. cit., table I.

<sup>2</sup> *Industrial Bulletin and Employment Review*, Nov.-Dec. 1944, p. 362.

<sup>3</sup> Includes also earnings in tobacco manufactures.

still ranked first with the highest average hourly earnings; ship-building and aircraft were listed second and third respectively for this matter, followed by foundries and machine shops, agricultural implement, iron and steel, and foundries, all war industries in which women's employment was generally not extensive before the war and increased greatly in the war years. Lowest average hourly earnings were reported for October 1941 in the silk and rayon, hosiery and knit goods, boot and shoe and paper products manufacturing industries. In August 1944 these industries were still among those in which the average hourly earnings were lowest, but they ranked slightly differently. In hosiery and knit goods,

average hourly earnings increased from \$0.492 to \$0.697, which represented the greatest increase among low-paying industries.

The following table gives the average hourly earnings of male and female wage earners, in selected manufacturing industries, according to the National Industrial Conference Board, for October 1941 and August 1944.

TABLE XII. AVERAGE HOURLY EARNINGS OF MALE AND FEMALE WAGE EARNERS, IN SELECTED MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES

(October 1941-August 1944)<sup>1</sup>

Industry	Males		Females	
	October 1941	August 1944 <sup>2</sup>	October 1941	August 1944 <sup>2</sup>
Agricultural implement.....	\$ .938	\$ 1.160	\$ .725	\$ .952
Automobile.....	1.184	1.379	.801	1.159
Boot and shoe.....	.707	.880	.501	.632
Chemical.....	.942	1.185	.616	.765
Rayon and allied products.....	.858	1.005 <sup>3</sup>	.614	.700 <sup>3</sup>
Cotton (North).....	.672	.851	.535	.680
Electrical manufacturing.....	.992	1.304	.671	.892
Furniture <sup>4</sup> .....	.813	1.072	.551	.868
Hosiery and knit goods.....	.759	1.108	.492	.697
Iron and steel.....	.983	1.189	—	.907
Leather tanning and finishing....	.760	.930	.597	.790
Meat packing.....	.835	.998	.640	.725
Paper products.....	.776	.982	.504	.660
Printing, book and job.....	.969	1.276	.542	.649
Rubber.....	1.058	1.364	.669	.883
Silk and rayon.....	.639	.867	.469	.632
Wool.....	.783	.984	.635	.805
Foundries and machine shops...	.912	1.251	.583	.955
Foundries.....	.877	1.164	.670	.903
Machines and machine tools...	.900	1.196	.628	.880
Hardware and small parts....	.871	1.193	.580	.872
Aircraft.....	—	1.289	—	1.027
Shipbuilding.....	—	1.369	—	1.134

<sup>1</sup> *Economic Record*, 11 Dec. 1941, p. 523; *Management Record*, Oct. 1944, p. 299.

<sup>2</sup> Regarding the figures for Aug. 1944, it is specified that hourly earnings are not wage rates because they include overtime and other monetary compensation.

<sup>3</sup> In Aug. 1944, average hourly earnings were calculated for the rayon-producing industries.

<sup>4</sup> Includes wood, metal, and upholstered household and office furniture.

Highest average weekly earnings in August 1944 were found also in war industries, namely, shipbuilding, automobile, aircraft, and agricultural implement, where workers worked generally longer hours. The average weekly earnings of male and female wage earners for selected industries in October 1941 and August 1944 are given in the following table:

TABLE XIII. AVERAGE WEEKLY EARNINGS OF MALE AND FEMALE  
WAGE EARNERS, IN SELECTED MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES

(October 1941-August 1944)<sup>1</sup>

Industry	Males		Females	
	October 1941	August 1944	October 1941	August 1944
Agricultural implement . . . . .	\$ 38.47	\$ 54.53	\$ 29.07	\$ 42.61
Automobile . . . . .	47.00	62.97	30.60	49.30
Boot and shoe . . . . .	27.09	38.45	18.05	25.03
Chemical . . . . .	38.69	54.52	24.62	32.44
Rayon and allied products . . . . .	33.86	43.68 <sup>2</sup>	23.50	26.75 <sup>2</sup>
Cotton (North) . . . . .	26.91	40.22	19.93	27.51
Electrical manufacturing . . . . .	44.04	62.69	26.91	38.59
Furniture <sup>2</sup> . . . . .	35.12	52.36	22.48	39.36
Hosiery and knit goods . . . . .	30.47	49.65	17.92	27.98
Iron and steel . . . . .	39.32	57.00	—	38.80
Leather tanning and finishing . . . . .	31.44	43.34	23.68	31.48
Meat packing . . . . .	33.02	50.68	23.81	31.36
Paper products . . . . .	33.51	44.61	19.96	27.04
Printing, book and job . . . . .	40.50	56.62	22.06	27.23
Rubber . . . . .	39.84	66.73	24.67	37.58
Silk and rayon . . . . .	23.64	40.39	16.97	25.17
Wool . . . . .	31.85	45.21	23.71	32.57
Foundries and machine shops . . . . .	42.46	60.00	24.05	41.31
Foundries . . . . .	38.51	56.31	25.40	37.77
Machines and machine tools . . . . .	45.36	59.13	27.00	38.27
Hardware and small parts . . . . .	40.01	57.01	24.10	36.81
Aircraft . . . . .	—	60.67	—	44.08
Shipbuilding . . . . .	—	64.67	—	50.44

<sup>1</sup> NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL CONFERENCE BOARD: *Economic Record*, 11 Dec. 1941, p. 523; *Management Record*, Oct. 1944, p. 299.

<sup>2</sup> Includes wood, metal and upholstered household and office furniture.

<sup>3</sup> In Aug. 1944, average weekly earnings were calculated for rayon-producing industries.

It would be interesting to compare women workers' average earnings (hourly and weekly) with the earnings of male unskilled workers. In August 1944 the general level of earnings of female wage earners (unskilled, semi-skilled and skilled) was still below that of unskilled male wage earners covered by the survey, but during the war years there was a tendency towards a reduction in the difference between the earnings of these two groups of workers. Whereas the difference in average earnings was \$0.157 in October 1941, it was reduced to \$0.134 by August 1944.<sup>1</sup>

A comparison of the average earnings (hourly and weekly) of female wage earners and unskilled male wage earners in 24 selected manufacturing industries is given in the following table, showing figures for October 1941 and August 1944<sup>2</sup>:

<sup>1</sup> *Economic Record*, 11 Dec. 1941, pp. 523 and 525; *Management Record*, Oct. 1944, pp. 299 and 301.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

TABLE XIV. AVERAGE HOURLY AND WEEKLY EARNINGS, FEMALE  
AND UNSKILLED MALE WAGE EARNERS  
(October 1941-August 1944)

	Average hourly earnings		Average weekly earnings	
	October 1941	August 1944	October 1941	August 1944
Male unskilled wage earners. . . .	\$ .718	\$ .891	\$ 29.92	\$ 41.18
Female wage earners (unskilled, semi-skilled, skilled) <sup>1</sup> . . . . .	.561	.757	21.37	31.31

<sup>1</sup> Earnings in the silk and rayon industry are included in the figures for women wage earners and not for male unskilled wage earners.

In some manufacturing industries, women workers' average earnings (hourly and weekly) were higher than those of unskilled male workers, and considerable advances were made in this connection during war years. According to the National Industrial Conference Board surveys, in October 1941, there were only three manufacturing industries in which female workers' average hourly earnings were greater than those of unskilled male wage earners, namely, boot and shoe, rayon and allied products, and hosiery and knit goods. By August 1944 this number had risen to ten, covering agricultural implement, automobile, boot and shoe, leather tanning and finishing, lumber and millwork, rubber (other than tires and tubes), wool, woollen products (other than woollen and worsted goods), machines and machine tools, and shipbuilding. Average hourly earnings of female workers and unskilled male workers in the iron and steel industry were close: \$0.907 and \$0.908 respectively.<sup>1</sup>

The difference in average weekly earnings did not vary to the same extent, owing, no doubt, to the greater number of hours worked by men, although the same trends are apparent. In October 1941 the level of women workers' weekly earnings was lower than that of unskilled male workers<sup>2</sup> in all manufacturing industries except one, the rayon and allied products industry. In August 1944, it was higher in two industries, the boot and shoe, and shipbuilding, which was not covered by the October 1941 survey, and in which women's employment made great strides during the war. But the level of weekly earnings for these two groups of workers was very close in some industries, such as the automobile industry (\$49.30 for women compared to \$49.46 for unskilled men),

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

and in the leather tanning and finishing industry (\$31.48 compared to \$31.60).<sup>1</sup>

*Women office workers.* The earnings of women office workers also increased, although to a substantially lesser extent, as is shown by partial surveys. In the State of New York, for instance, the average weekly earnings of female office workers in manufacturing industries was \$30.00 in October 1942 (clerical staff, technical employees, laboratory assistants doing routine work, etc., were included in this group of workers).<sup>2</sup> In October 1944, the average weekly earnings of non-supervisory female office workers alone in manufacturing establishments was \$34.68. The fact that the supervisory and technical staff was counted when the average weekly earnings were calculated for October 1941 raised this figure to a certain extent, and a strict comparison between the figures of October 1941 and 1944 is not justified, although the variation in the average caused by the inclusion of the earnings of the supervisory staff in calculating the average for October 1941 is probably small, since, in October 1944, the proportion of women in supervisory posts compared to all employees in this category was only 9 per cent., and since employment of women in supervisory capacities has tended to increase during the war, and may therefore be presumed to have been smaller in October 1941.<sup>3</sup> From October 1943 to October 1944, the average weekly earnings of non-supervisory female office workers increased by 7.5 per cent., as regards offices in manufacturing industries; the increases ranged from 0.1 to 9.1 per cent., according to the various industries. As regards female production workers in these industries, however, the general increase for the same period was 9.4 per cent., with increases ranging from 22.3 to 0.4 per cent.<sup>4</sup>

*Service industries.* Compared to women's wages in war industries and factories, the wages of the women workers in the service industries, although they increased during the war, were still the lowest. Service industries experienced difficulties in recruiting or maintaining their female labour force, and it was reported, for instance, that 600 laundries in various localities had been closed in 1942 because of lack of workers. In the State of New York, in order to avert a serious shortage of labour in these industries, the regional War Labor Board approved in August 1943 several wage increases, among them an increase to 50 cents an hour for the least skilled workers in organised laundries. The

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>2</sup> *Industrial Bulletin and Employment Review*, Nov. 1942, p. 383.

<sup>3</sup> *Idem*, Nov.-Dec. 1944, pp. 336-337.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*



National War Labor Board has, in a number of cases, approved an increase in pay rates for workers in laundries, as well as for telephone workers and certain hotel employees. It was disclosed by a study made by the regional War Labor Board in the State of New York in December 1943 that 60 per cent. of the female workers in laundries had been earning less than 50 cents an hour; in fact, thousands of women in the State received less than 36 cents an hour in cleaning and dyeing establishments, less than 35 cents in laundries, less than 37 cents in beauty parlors and less than 30 cents as hotel chambermaids.<sup>1</sup> The scarcity of domestic labour had the effect of raising the wages of those who had remained in household employment. For instance, the median hourly rate for domestic day workers in the State of New York reached 60 cents, and full-time jobs were paid at about 45 cents an hour in December 1943, compared with 35 to 40 cents for day work and 25 to 30 cents for full-time work, early in 1941.<sup>2</sup> In other service industries, the demands for labour, together with the enforcement of the minimum wage orders, were a factor in raising wage standards. The wages of women employed in the laundry, beauty service, confectionery, cleaning and dyeing, and restaurant and hotel industries began to rise in the State of New York, even before the war, as soon as minimum wage orders were established, as is shown by the following median hourly earnings from the date of the establishment of minimum wage orders in the various industries until 1943<sup>3</sup>:

	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents
Laundry . . . . .	1937—35.3	1939—38.2	1942—43.1	
Beauty service . . . . .	1936—27.6	1939—39.2	1942—41.6	1943—50.7
Confectionery . . . . .	1937—38.0	1939—39.9	1942—48.7	
Cleaning and dyeing . . . . .	1938—33.2	1939—37.2	1942—42.4	
Restaurant . . . . .	1938—25.4	1941—33.0	1942—38.2	
Hotel, all year . . . . .	1938—26.2	1941—33.5	1942—37.1	

#### *Wage Rates of Women on Men's Jobs.*

The policy of the rate for the job, which has been repeatedly recommended by federal agencies, was applied when women replaced men in jobs that had not been changed. In many instances, however, women were paid lower rates than men for the same work. Equal pay practices were fairly extensive in war plants, compared with traditional women-employing industries. Even when the

<sup>1</sup> *Monthly Labor Review*, Oct. 1943, pp. 657-668; Apr. 1944, pp. 767-768; see also, *Women's War Wages*, *op. cit.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Women's War Wages*, *op. cit.*

principle of equal pay was accepted, there remained a few practical difficulties which limited the application of the principle. The chief obstacles, according to the Women's Bureau, were (a) the fact that women were not always given an opportunity to do the same work as men, and (b) that they were often denied the opportunity of upgrading and promotion. The findings of some partial surveys may illustrate the general trends.

In 65 war plants of five selected industries (aircraft assembly, artillery ammunition, small-arms ammunition, cannon and small arms, and machine tools) which reported to the Women's Bureau on the wages of women in a survey in 1942, beginning rates were reported to be the same for women production workers as for men in 34 plants (more than four fifths of these in aircraft assembly), but in the other industries women beginners received generally lower rates than men.<sup>1</sup>

In the course of a field survey in 1943, Women's Bureau representatives covered 208 plants engaged in war production scattered among 39 States and employing 2 million factory employees, of whom more than 400,000 were women. Of these plants, 185, or 89 per cent., reported the same rates for women as for men on the same job; the remainder paid lower rates to women.<sup>2</sup>

Data contributed by 155 plants in manufacturing industries, employing about 687,000 workers at the end of March 1943, give more detailed information regarding the extent to which the policy of "equal pay for equal work" had been put into effect up to that time. A comparison between entrance rates (excluding common labourers) paid to unskilled men and unskilled women workers showed that, while 85.8 per cent. of the men were paid rates ranging from 50 to 79 cents an hour, only 76.3 per cent. of the women hired for men's jobs, and 68.2 per cent. of the women hired for women's jobs, were paid rates within those limits. Three plants reported paying 35 to 39 cents an hour to women (either on men's or women's jobs), whereas no plant paid less than 40 cents an hour to male workers; 3.9 per cent. only of the men workers were paid between 40 and 49 cents an hour, while 15.5 per cent. of the women replacing men or doing similar work, and 24.2 per cent. of the women hired for women's work, were paid between 35 and 49 cents an hour; 60 to 64 cents an hour was paid by the largest group of plants to male workers, with 65 to 69 cents in the next largest

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<sup>1</sup> *Labor Information Bulletin*, Mar. 1943, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Information communicated by the Women's Bureau.

group; and for women entering either men's or women's occupations, the corresponding rates were 50 to 54 cents, and 60 to 64 cents.<sup>1</sup>

In the aircraft-propeller industry a survey made by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (United States Department of Labor) in October 1942, on wage rates for similar jobs indicated that, in all plants combined, women's average hourly rates were below men's by from 2 to 31 cents; in only one plant, and for a single occupation (inspector of machine parts), was the hourly rate for women above \$1.<sup>2</sup> Another survey of a representative sample of the aircraft-parts industry, made in November 1942 in California, showed that women workers, who constituted 19.3 per cent. of all the first-shift workers whose occupational wage rates were obtained, averaged 71.1 cents an hour, compared with 96.2 cents for male workers. Comparison of men's and women's rates for the same occupations and classes of work indicated three average rates higher for women (janitors, drill press operators—class B, and labourers); for other occupations, men's rates were higher.<sup>3</sup> Some employers justified their payment of lower rates to women; their chief reason was that jobs had to be broken down into more simplified skills for women and that women could, for example, handle only one machine instead of two or three, could do only the lighter work, or required set-up and servicing by men.

Figures collected in the State of New York in 1942 and 1943 show that, although the principle of equal pay had been more and more widely accepted by employers who engaged women to replace men on their jobs, there still existed comparatively large differences between men's and women's wages, even when production was the same. But women working on "women's jobs" were at a disadvantage as far as their wage rates were concerned, compared to those working on men's jobs. Replacement of men by women in New York war industries was much accelerated in the latter half of 1942.<sup>4</sup> Of the plants that requested dispensation from labour laws concerning women from June to 7 December 1942, nearly 30 per cent. reported replacement of men by women, as against 14 per cent. in the first half year of the war. In the earlier period, 141 establishments submitted comparative rates, 89 of

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<sup>1</sup> *Wartime Pay of Women in Industry*, *op. cit.*, pp. 17-18. (In 23 plants no women were hired for "women's jobs"; in 4 plants women were not engaged for "men's jobs" but vacancies were filled by upgrading women already employed; 3 plants did not provide information on minimum hourly entrance rates for unskilled workers.)

<sup>2</sup> *Monthly Labor Review*, Apr. 1943, p. 748.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 758.

<sup>4</sup> *Idem*, July 1943, p. 102. See also: "The Equal Pay Principle in the Replacement of Men by Women in the New York State War Industries", Division of Women in Industry and Minimum Wage, New York Department of Labor, reprinted from *Industrial Bulletin*, Mar. 1943.

which reported equal rates; in the second period 513 submitted comparative entrance rates, 314 of which (about the same proportion) reported equal rates, 173 lower rates, and 26 equal rates for some occupations and lower rates for others. Plants paying lower rates to women reported differences of from 5 per cent. to 37½ per cent.; in the greater number of such plants, differences were 16 per cent. or more.

A more recent study<sup>1</sup> was made in December 1943. It included 143 manufacturing plants and 56 non-manufacturing firms and covered 154,587 women workers out of a total of 396,884 workers employed by these firms. Thirty-seven per cent. of the workers in the manufacturing plants and one half in the service industries were women. In 45 per cent. of the war production plants, all the women employed were doing men's jobs, and in two thirds of the plants more than half the women were doing jobs ordinarily regarded as men's jobs. In 36 per cent. of the non-manufacturing firms, at least one half of the women were doing work comparable to that performed by men. The study included only those firms that were hiring untrained and inexperienced men and women for similar or comparable work, with the idea that they would eventually be trained for more skilled production jobs. In 60 per cent. of the 143 manufacturing plants, inexperienced women received the same entrance rates as men, and in 63 per cent. of the 56 non-manufacturing firms women received the same entrance rates as men in all the occupations in which they replaced men. In the 57 manufacturing plants where the equal pay principle was not observed, 44 had systems of automatic wage progression over a length of time which was regarded as a training period, but in only 18 cases was the difference between men's and women's wages eliminated or decreased; in the other cases it remained unchanged or even increased. It should be stressed here that in 34 plants with wage differences women's production was the same or higher than men's on all jobs where replacement had occurred. Women's production was said to be equal or greater than men's on all or some jobs in 122, or 88 per cent., of the 139 plants which reported this information.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, Division of Women in Industry and Minimum Wage, State of New York: *Women's Wages in Men's Jobs* (Feb. 1944).

<sup>2</sup> Occupations in which women were said to have equivalent production to men: sensitive drilling at small tolerances, spot welding, bench welding, gauge reading, rough-surface grinding, bench inspection, final inspection, testing, detail bench assembly, small-tool assembly, punch-press operation and other machinework. As a result of upgrading, women attained to such skilled production jobs as multiple-spindle machine operation (in an aircraft plant), tool grinding (in an ordnance plant), operation of an engine lathe (in an electrical machinery plant), and skilled welding (which was paid from \$1.00 to \$1.50 per hour in an aircraft factory). Also mentioned among the higher skilled jobs held by women in industry were set-up women, assemblers and inspectors, and grinding machine and turret-lathe operators (*Women's Wages in Men's Jobs, op. cit.*).

When employers recorded lower production for women than men, the strength factor was usually involved. The fact that women tire more easily than men was also mentioned. The fact also that there are specific legal restrictions on the number of hours that women may work has been claimed as another factor for women's less productive work. But the survey showed that in 90 of the 143 manufacturing plants visited, women and men worked exactly the same weekly hours. In 64 of these, the work week was not longer than 48 hours, and in 24 of these, both men and women worked more than 48 hours.

In the 143 manufacturing plants, the range of rates of women who took the place of men workers was almost the same as for men workers, *i.e.*, from 40 cents to 80 cents an hour. But women received less than 60 cents an hour as an entrance rate in 55 per cent. of the plants compared with 29 per cent. of the plants in the case of men workers. Nineteen plants paid unskilled men 75 cents or more an hour as a starting rate, but only 12 paid these wage rates to their women workers.

In this case again, it was found that women, working on jobs similar or comparable to men's, received higher wage rates than those engaged on "women's jobs". In almost 80 per cent. of the plants, women performing "women's work" were earning less than 60 cents an hour as starting rate, and in more than 20 per cent. of the plants these women received less than 60 cents an hour. No "woman's job" was paid an entrance rate as high as 75 cents.

### *Equal Pay Policy.*

The principle of equal pay for equal work, now better phrased as "the rate for the job without regard to sex", has long been advocated by the U.S. Department of Labor and especially the Women's Bureau. Important developments occurred during the war in the application of this principle.

The principle was officially endorsed in a joint statement of wartime labour standards issued in December 1942 by the War, Navy and Labor Departments, the War Production Board, the War Manpower Commission, the Maritime Commission and the Office of Defense Transportation. The National Association of Manufacturers recommended it in a bulletin of May 1942. Organised labour (the United Electrical Radio Machine Workers of America (C. I. O.), the United Automobile, Aircraft and Agricultural Implement Workers of America, the Amalgamated Association of Street, Electric Railway and Motor Coach Employees, the United Rubber Workers of America and the United Steelworkers of

America among others) approved the principle, and trade union agreements frequently contained such provisions. Again, in March 1944, the Women's Bureau included the principle of the rate for the job in a series of suggestions for union contract provisions which were worked out in collaboration with women representatives from trade unions.<sup>1</sup>

*Policy of the National War Labor Board.*

The principle of equal pay was formally applied by the National War Labor Board. In August and September 1942 the National War Labor Board defined its policy regarding remuneration of women workers in some of its decisions: the Norman-Hoffmann Bearings case (Stanford, Connecticut), August 1942; the Brown and Sharpe Manufacturing Company case (Providence, R.I.), 25 September 1942; and the General Motors case, 26 September 1942.

In the particular case of the General Motors Corporation and United Automobile Aircraft Workers of America, the Board decided that rates of pay for female employees should be based upon established rates for the work performed. Where such work is identical with or substantially the same as that performed by men on the same or comparable operations, the base rates and hourly rates should be the same. Any difference which results in lower pay for women assigned to the same operation, if they produce the same quantity and quality of output, would be discriminatory. Thus it would be improper to use slight or inconsequential changes in job content or in method of operation as a sole reason for setting up a wage difference against women employees. Where, however, lower production or decreased performance standards must be established for women as compared to men, a proportionate adjustment of wages for women is compatible with the principle of equal pay for equal work. If the employment of women entails extra supervision or the employment of extra men to undertake heavy physical work which had been established as a part of certain jobs and this employment increases the unit cost of production, an adjustment of wages rates would be in line with the principle of equal pay for equal work. On the other hand, if the assignment of the heavy parts of the job serves as a division of work and a specialisation of tasks which may be made without any increase in unit labour costs, even if the female employees

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<sup>1</sup> *Monthly Labor Review*, July 1943, p. 104; *Wartime Pay of Women in Industry*, op. cit., p. 6; U.S. WOMEN'S BUREAU: *Suggested Standards for Union Contract Provisions Affecting Women* (Mar. 1944).

continue to receive the established rate for the operation, there would be no sound basis for fixing a differential rate against women workers. Such a division of tasks has often been used on jobs manned entirely by male employees, as a means of reducing unit costs, while maintaining hourly rates.<sup>1</sup>

*Increase in women's wage rates.* The application of the principle of equal pay means, in most cases, an increase in women's wage rates. Action had therefore to be taken in order to permit such adjustments, while the general policy was to stabilise wages and prevent inflation. On 24 November 1942 the National War Labor Board issued General Order No. 16, authorising employers to raise, without consulting the Board in advance, women's wages up to the level of men's for comparable quality and quantity of work, despite the Wage Stabilization Act and Executive Order No. 9250 of October 1942. Order No. 16 concerned only employers who wished to make wage adjustments within their own wage structure, provided that such adjustments did not furnish a basis either for increasing price ceilings or for resisting reductions in price ceilings otherwise justified.<sup>2</sup> These adjustments could still be made without the Board's approval, in spite of the President's Executive Order "Hold the Line" (No. 9328, of 8 April 1943), as was specified by the War Labor Board Chairman in a letter to the Secretary of Labor. In this letter he explained that Order No. 16 may be applied where women replace men on jobs that are not changed, and he also defined the cases in which the Order did not apply and never had applied, namely: (a) jobs to which only women had been assigned in the past; and (b) attempts to increase wages being paid to women in one plant on the ground that in some other plants similar work was being done by men at a higher wage.<sup>3</sup> In January 1944, the National War Labor Board published an interpretation of General Order No. 16, according to which wage adjustments required by State statutes which prohibit wage discrimination between the sexes were adjustments within the meaning of General Order No. 16, and might be made without approval of the National War Labor Board.<sup>4</sup>

*Seniority.* Some wage problems which were related more particularly to the question of seniority and raised by the fact that women replaced men on their jobs, were clarified when, on 28 July 1943, a regional board (San Francisco) approved a private

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<sup>1</sup> *Wage and Hour Reporter*, 5 Oct. 1942.

<sup>2</sup> *Federal Register*, No. 233, 28 Nov. 1942, p. 9861.

<sup>3</sup> Office of War Information, National War Labor Board, press release, 4 June 1943.

<sup>4</sup> *Wage and Hour Reporter*, 17 Jan. 1944, p. 52.

company's statement of policy relating to women's wages and declared it to be in line with the National War Labor Board's policy. The statement, outlined below, shows the limitation of the factual application of the principle of equality under war conditions. The basis of the statement was as follows:

(a) Women being transferred to men's jobs for the duration of the war acquire no seniority in the men's jobs, but retain and accumulate seniority in the women's jobs from which they were transferred;

(b) Women employed on or transferred to jobs formerly held by men receive as starting rate the women's rate then current in the plant;

(c) A woman taking over a man's job completely and producing work of equal quality and quantity is entitled to the man's rate at the end of the learning period;

(d) If it is necessary to change the duties or responsibilities of the man's job in order to substitute a woman, the woman will receive the women's rate current in the plant; if the changes necessary are not extensive, an intermediate rate is to be fixed within 30 days, based on the cost of product turned out by the woman as compared to men;

(e) The statement provides for an arbitration board consisting of one representative of the management, one of the union, and a technical representative selected by the two.<sup>1</sup>

*Maintenance of collective agreements.* Among the various reasons which hampered the application of the equal pay principle was the policy of the War Labor Board not to abrogate collective agreements; the fact that a contract did not contain a reopening clause prevented in some cases the equalisation of the rates for men and women, which was otherwise justified. In one typical case, a regional board refused the union's request that the company be ordered to pay equal pay for equal work on the ground that granting the request would be an abrogation of the contract, since the parties had an existing contract which covered the issue and contained no reopening clause. The contract, established in May 1942, provided that if it was necessary to employ women to replace men during the war, the rate for women would be two thirds of the rate paid to men in the same qualification. The National War Labor Board upheld unanimously the decision of the regional board and denied a petition for review of the ruling. The Board pointed out that since *none* of the executive or legislative Acts under which the Board operated *required* equal pay for equal work, an existing contract could not be opened by a Board Order to grant a request for equalisation of rates (A.F. of L. Bakery and Confectionery Workers' Union and 12 Houston bakeries).<sup>2</sup>

*Wage differences based on sex.* Such differences were permitted in certain cases by decision of regional boards,

<sup>1</sup> *Idem*, 30 Aug. 1943, p. 817.

<sup>2</sup> *Idem*, 22 Nov. 1943, p. 1132; 17 Jan. 1944, p. 43.



particularly when a rest period was allowed to women during working hours. Thus, for jobs on which women had not been previously employed, a decision of a regional board <sup>1</sup> fixed women's rates at 5 cents an hour less than men's, on the grounds that women were given a 10-minute rest period during the day; for work previously done by men and women, the board reduced the previous difference of 25 cents an hour to 10 cents (5 cents being a rest-period allowance). In one case, at least, a decision of a regional War Labor Board which provided different wage rates for men and women workers was rescinded through action of the Women's Bureau, which sent a protest to the National War Labor Board. <sup>2</sup>

*Differentiation between "men's" and "women's" jobs.* Such differentiation still remains in many industries, and hinders the application of the principle of the rate for the job. A number of decisions involving this problem were given by labour boards with a view to abolishing unjustified wage differentiations. A step towards the evaluation of the job on the basis of its content, rather than on the basis of sex, was made officially when a regional War Labor Board (Detroit) ordered, in a case involving three plants of the General Motors Corporation and the C.I.O. United Automobile Workers, that the designation "female" be dropped from the description of a classification of work traditionally performed by women and that a rate be substituted based on the skill and difficulty of the work involved for one establishment at a time, when sex differentials in wages were recognised. The board, therefore, accepted the classification into "light" and "heavy" work and the adjustment of the rates on the basis of the job content; both men and women might be employed in either classification. Soon after, the same board decided similarly another case. In one plant, job classification had to be re-evaluated so as to eliminate sex differentials when existing "women's" jobs were, in actual content, less skilled and exacting than the "men's", but when the differences in rates between these jobs were greater than the differences in the job content warranted. <sup>3</sup> By the beginning of 1945, there were already signs of reconversion in industrial production, and cases arising from these new developments came before the War Labor Board. The equal pay policy was then tested in circumstances which will presumably often occur during the reconversion period. In one case, a difference of 10 cents an hour had been fixed by agreement between the company and the trade union when women began to be used on jobs formerly held

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<sup>1</sup> *Wage and Hour Reporter*, 1 Nov. 1943, p. 1058.

<sup>2</sup> *Life and Labor Bulletin*, Oct. 1943.

<sup>3</sup> *Wage and Hour Reporter*, 25 Oct. 1943, p. 1027; 1 Nov. 1943, p. 1064.

by men; jobs were then, in conformity with the War Labor Board policy, divided between "light" and "heavy" classifications, with lower pay for the light jobs. A dispute arose when a number of men, as a result of a production cut-back, exercised their seniority rights under the contract to displace ("bump") women with less seniority in order to avoid being laid off, but objected to being paid the same rates as the women they replaced. The objection, pressed by the union, was based on the fact that women in the plant had always received 10 cents less per hour than men in comparable classifications. The company claimed that the men were doing women's work and therefore were entitled to women's pay only. The regional War Labor Board before which the case was brought decided in favour of the union and granted the full rate to men, pointing out that the difference had been agreed upon because there were limitations imposed by legislation on weights which women may lift and that this constituted the only difference between male and female classifications for the same work; when men replaced women, the company was then free to use men's superior range in weight lifting. The regional board's decision will, no doubt, constitute an important precedent and affect a great number of workers in cases when, at the company's request or as a result of contractual provisions, men are used to replace women on lighter work (Nash Kelvinator Corporation Propeller Division (Lansing, Mich.), and International Union, United Automobile Aircraft and Agricultural Implement Workers of America (C.I.O.)).<sup>1</sup>

*Retroactive equal pay.* In this respect the National War Labor Board set a precedent in ordering five department stores to adjust women's rates in accordance with the principle of equal pay when women have replaced men at a lower wage rate, and ruled that the rates should be adjusted upward retroactively to the date when the women took over the men's job but not to a date earlier than the expiration of the prior contract.<sup>2</sup>

*General.* The general principles applied by the National War Labor Board during the war have been thus summarised by the Board itself on the occasion of two important cases which came before it towards the end of 1945:

(1) Where women are working on the same jobs as men, or on jobs formerly performed by men, or on jobs performed interchangeably by men and women, or on jobs which differ only inconsequently and not in measurable job content from jobs performed by men, the women should receive the same rate of pay as the men unless (a) their output is less in quantity or quality than the output of men,

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<sup>1</sup> *Idem*, 5 Feb. 1945, pp. 120-121.

<sup>2</sup> *Idem*, 30 Aug. 1943, p. 827.

or (b) there are ascertainable and specific added costs to the company resulting from the use of women, such as provision for extra helpers or for rest periods not provided in the case of men. In the case of (a) or (b) appropriate adjustments in rates may be made.

(2) Intangible alleged cost factors incident to the employment of women (such as absenteeism, lack of qualification for other work to which they are not assigned, relative impermanence in industry, legal restrictions, lack of prior training in industry, necessity of providing sanitary facilities, etc., . . .) cannot legitimately be used to reduce the rate to which women would otherwise be entitled on the basis of job content.

(3) The rates for jobs which have historically been performed by women only, and which differ measurably from the jobs performed by men, are presumed to be correct in relation to the men's rates in the plant, especially where they are of long standing and have been accepted in collective bargaining.

(4) This presumption can be overcome by affirmative evidence of the existence of an intra-plant inequity derived from a comparison of the content of the jobs in question with the content of the jobs performed by men. Some consideration, however, may be given in such cases, in modifying long-established rate relationships, to the collective bargaining history.

(5) In particular cases, under a proper evaluation, there may be women's jobs which warrant a lower rate than the rate assigned to the lowest men's job, depending entirely on the circumstances.

(6) The determination of proper rates for men's and women's jobs call for judgment and, wherever possible, it should be made through collective bargaining.<sup>1</sup>

### *Equal Pay Legislation.*

Legislation prohibiting discrimination between the sexes in the payment of wages made considerable headway during the war, and under the pressure of public opinion, a number of proposals were put forward in State legislative bodies, as well as in the federal House of Representatives and in the Senate.

Before the war, only two States had equal pay laws, Michigan<sup>2</sup> and Montana.<sup>3</sup> During the war, 4 other States, Washington (1943)<sup>4</sup>, Illinois (1943)<sup>5</sup>, New York (1944)<sup>6</sup>, and Massachusetts (1945)<sup>7</sup> passed such legislation. The Michigan and Illinois laws cover only manufacturing industries, while the Washington and Montana laws are general in scope.

The New York Act applies to any employment except domestic work, employment on farms and in non-profit organisations and

<sup>1</sup> National War Labor Board, Division of Public Information, press release (40 pp. mimeo.), 29 Dec. 1945, p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Act No. 239, 1919, Sec. 556.

<sup>3</sup> Act of 1919, Ch. 147, Sec. 3090.

<sup>4</sup> Act of 22 March 1943, Sec. 17-1.

<sup>5</sup> Act of 23 July 1943, Sec. 1.

<sup>6</sup> Text of the new sections of the Labor Law communicated by the Department of Labor, Division of Women in Industry and Minimum Wage. They were passed in April 1944 and became effective on 1 July 1944.

<sup>7</sup> 1945 Laws, Ch. 584.

associations, and provides for enforcement through the State Industrial Commissioner. Before the equal pay provisions were passed in the State of New York, the policy of equal treatment of men and women workers was adopted by the State of New York Apprenticeship Council in respect of apprentices, when it approved and registered the first female machinist apprentice at the beginning of 1944.<sup>1</sup>

Proposals for amendment of existing legislation or enactment of new legislative provisions have been made with a view to establishing the principle of equal pay for equal work in a number of States, such as California, Connecticut, Illinois (where it would extend the scope of the existing equal pay legislation), Indiana, Utah and Vermont.<sup>2</sup>

On the federal level, no action has yet been taken, but various moves have been made in the House of Representatives and in the Senate for the inclusion of the principle of equal pay for equal work in the legislation, showing the wide-spread interest that the question has aroused in the country. In January 1945 a Bill was introduced in the federal House of Representatives.<sup>3</sup> It would provide for the inclusion of the principle of equal pay in several important federal laws, namely, the Fair Labor Standards Act (1938), the War Labor Disputes Act (1943), and the Stabilization Act (1942). A few months later, in June 1945, a Bill was introduced in the Senate; it would make it an "unfair wage practice" to pay women wages lower than those which the particular employer is paying or has paid to men for work of comparable quality and quantity, and it would also ban lay-offs and discharges of women made purely for the purpose of replacing them by men. The proposed law would apply to employers (with 8 or more employees) "engaged in commerce or in transactions or in operations affecting commerce", including clerical ("white collar") work or any agricultural employment. The proposed law would be administered by a new division to be established within the Women's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Labor, to be under the direction of the Director of the Bureau; an Administrator would be in immediate charge of the Division. The Director would appoint industry committees, the duties of which would include making "findings and recommendations which may include evaluation of job content, job classifications, standards for training and employment, and appropriate wage rate ratios between job classifications or defined

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<sup>1</sup> New York State Department of Labor, press release, 7 Jan. 1944.

<sup>2</sup> *Wage and Hour Reporter*, 12 Feb. 1945, pp. 142-144; 5 Mar. 1945, p. 229.

<sup>3</sup> 79th Congress, 1st Session, H.R. 526, "A Bill to Promote the Principle of Equal Pay for Equal Work", introduced on 3 Jan. 1945.

units of work". This Bill provides for enforcement action through the Director or her agent. Penalties for violations of the Act would include fine or imprisonment (or both) and blacklisting.<sup>1</sup>

### *Health and Welfare Problems*

The extent of turnover and absenteeism among women workers is largely related to the insufficiency of welfare measures designed to meet the special needs of women in industry. It is true that the rates of turnover and absenteeism have been reported as higher among women workers than among men; but an analysis of the causes of these facts indicates that adequate welfare measures could and, in fact, have, when taken, gone a long way towards reducing turnover and avoidable absenteeism among women workers.

### *Absenteeism and Turnover.*

A report (July 1943) of the Bureau of Labor Statistics on turnover rates in industries revealed that, in every industry for which data on women were compared with those on men, a higher percentage of women than of men quit their jobs. The extent to which women's quit rate exceeded that of men ranged from 0.81 point in aluminium and magnesium smelting and refining to 3.81 points in ammunition other than small arms. The respective figures for men and women in the first-named industry were: 10.39 quits per 100 men and 11.20 quits per 100 women; in the other industry, the corresponding figures were 4.52 and 8.33. Two conditions must be borne in mind in consideration of these figures: (1) the fact that only three branches of industry (the electrical products group) of the 27 listed represented women's peacetime employments, the others being almost wholly heavy industry or war production enterprises new to women; and (2) the fact that only when housing and transportation are adequate, and when special facilities are made available in the way of child care and time allowances for shopping and other essential matters which relieve women of domestic worries, women's attendance on the job equals that expected of men.<sup>2</sup> It seems, however, according to a report of the Women's Advisory Committee of the War Manpower Commission, that by the end of 1943, separations of women for munitions employment tended to exceed new hires and "large numbers of women needed to be hired merely to replace women

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<sup>1</sup> 79th Congress, 1st Session, S. 1178, 21 June 1945.

<sup>2</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics, press release, 9 Sept. 1943; *New York Times*, 24 Aug., 14 Sept., and 24 Sept. 1943.

changing jobs or leaving the labour force", although in many instances separations seemed to have been the result of lay-offs rather than quits.<sup>1</sup>

A study on absenteeism was made in November 1942 by the Management Research Division of the National Industrial Conference Board's Review. The report was based on absence data from 22 plants located in 13 States, which employed at that time 104,357 persons, of whom 23.2 per cent. were women. Women were reported absent 109 per cent. more frequently than men. They accounted for 39.3 per cent. of all absences of one, two or three days' duration, 40.0 per cent. of four days or longer, or 39.3 per cent. of all absences. There was a definite tendency for women to be absent for short periods of time: 84 per cent. of all women's absences were of one, two or three days' duration and accounted for 50 per cent. of their time lost because of sickness, non-industrial accidents or personal reasons. Women showed also a greater tendency to be absent for personal reasons: 53.6 per cent. of their absences were reported under this category, as compared with 50.7 per cent. for men. Illnesses accounted for 46.0 per cent. of women's absences as compared with 48.6 per cent. for men.<sup>2</sup>

### *Industrial Safety.*

According to various reports, a large proportion of all absenteeism is due to industrial illness and accidents. Although it is difficult, owing to lack of complete statistics, to arrive at the exact increase in women's industrial accidents in wartime, obviously the trend was upward in a proportion greater in many cases than the increase of women in industry. For example, in Illinois, machine accidents to women increased by 65 per cent. in 1941 over 1940; in Wisconsin, injuries increased by 90 per cent. from January to December 1942; in Michigan, injuries disabling at least 8 days increased by 82 per cent., from July to December 1942, compared with the previous six months.<sup>3</sup>

The main causes of industrial diseases and accidents, as indicated in studies by the Women's Bureau, were reported to be inexperience of a great number of women workers; unsuitability of women's clothing; inadaptation of factory equipment to women's physical characteristics; and special hazards such as those due to lack of muscular strength for handling heavy material. More-

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<sup>1</sup> WOMEN'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE, War Manpower Commission: *Womanpower, An Appraisal* (30 Apr. 1944).

<sup>2</sup> NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL CONFERENCE BOARD: *Management Record*, Feb. 1943, pp. 63-65.

<sup>3</sup> WOMEN'S BUREAU: *Women's Wartime Occupational Hazards* (mimeo. document, 11 Mar. 1943).

over, development of war production needs and changes in chemical processes increased women's exposure to harmful substances (dermatitis producers, specific poisons) and bad conditions of work. Certain special problems arose from the expansion of women's employment in industries such as X-ray operations, radium dial-painting, welding, and so forth. The question was further complicated by the fact that conditions of work that were considered within the safety limits in peacetime may have become harmful on account of numerous additional factors which lower resistance to industrial fatigue and ailments.

A conference of the Army, the Navy, the Maritime Commission, and other federal agencies, with State labour commissioners and the Women's Bureau was called early in 1943 by the Secretary of Labor to consider some of the problems facing industry and relating specifically to women's employment. As regards the safety and health of women war workers, it was pointed out that since the State labour departments usually are the only agencies with legal authority to require changes in working conditions, labour department inspectors could be instrumental in preventing injuries and industrial diseases among women.<sup>1</sup>

Trained personnel from the United States Department of Labor were in a position to advise employers on safety devices and technical changes necessary for the security and welfare of the workers. The Women's Bureau also issued several advisory pamphlets giving recommendations on women workers' safety and health in the factory, on the ground that women war workers had special accident problems. General recommendations were put forward, namely, that instruction be given on a non-production basis so that speed would not increase the industrial hazards; that work garments be designed to meet safety and comfort requirements, and that methods of presenting and enforcing clothing rules be elaborated; and that working equipment and environment be accommodated to women (including such adjustments as installing wooden platforms, lowering work benches, providing adjustable seats, changing position of machine control and adding guards to machinery). Handling heavy weights could be made possible by mechanical devices for lifting and moving, since women should not, according to U.S. standards, be allowed to lift over 25 pounds when the work requires 10 lifts or more per hour. After a comprehensive study of the hazards of the occupation, medical and engineering methods of control should be used to prevent occupational disease.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Labor Information Bulletin*, Apr. 1943, p. 5; May 1943, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Women's Wartime Occupational Hazards*, *op. cit.*

Recommendations regarding specific hazards were worked out by interested agencies, which set advisory standards when safety conditions were not fixed by regulations or when the latter were found inadequate. Some of the questions of particular interest to women are mentioned below.

The Division of Labor Standards of the United States Department of Labor published a study including recommendations concerning the prevention of weight-lifting injuries.<sup>1</sup> This bulletin was prepared under a technical advisory committee of representatives of several industrial companies, the United States Public Health Service and the Department of Labor. It gave certain basic principles for the avoidance of such injuries by careful planning in the use of mechanical lifting and conveying devices, and by controlling the amount, pace, and duration of manual lifting and carrying; the limit for women should be the handling of 25 pounds in compact form, and "break periods", free from strenuous physical exertion, should be provided.

Although the American Standards Association published in 1935 a safety code for the protection of workers on abrasive wheel operations, and some States had codes for dust collection and safe operation on such jobs, the Women's Bureau felt it desirable to make recommendations for protective methods concerning such operations when performed by women, since they might have special health and injury problems.<sup>2</sup>

Other questions such as adequate seating<sup>3</sup>, proper footwear<sup>4</sup>, time for meals and rest<sup>5</sup>, good lighting in factories<sup>6</sup>, and suitable washing and toilet facilities<sup>7</sup>, were dealt with by the Women's Bureau in some of its publications.

#### *Use of Women Supervisors and Counsellors.*

Women have been used even in peacetime in the personnel departments of some companies, as directors, assistants, employment managers, and employment interviewers. In wartime, since many companies employed women workers for the first time; they appointed women in increasing numbers to positions involving personnel duties, as advisers either in general personnel policy or

<sup>1</sup> *A Guide to the Prevention of Weight-Lifting Injuries*, Special Bulletin No. 11.

<sup>2</sup> WOMEN'S BUREAU: *Hazards to Women Employed in War Plants on Abrasive Wheel Jobs*, Special Bulletin No. 7.

<sup>3</sup> WOMEN'S BUREAU: *Women's Effective War Work Requires Good Posture*, Special Bulletin No. 10.

<sup>4</sup> "Work Shoes Fill Health and Safety Needs", in *Labor Information Bulletin*, July 1943, pp. 4-5.

<sup>5</sup> WOMEN'S BUREAU: *Women's Effective War Work Requires Time for Meals and Rest*, Special Bulletin No. 5.

<sup>6</sup> WOMEN'S BUREAU: *Women's Work in the War*, Bulletin No. 193, July 1943.

<sup>7</sup> WOMEN'S BUREAU: *Washing and Toilet Facilities for Women in Industry*, Special Bulletin No. 4.



in matters affecting women workers only. The Women's Advisory Committee of the War Manpower Commission urged the wider development of in-plant counselling services designed to assist women employees in personal and job-adjustment problems, particularly acute in the case of new and inexperienced workers. The Women's Advisory Committee recognised that a counselling service "has the effect of reducing absenteeism and turnover and of increasing the quantity and improving the quality of production".<sup>1</sup>

From reports that reached the Women's Bureau, women who were employed as personnel supervisors were usually responsible for the selection and placement of the woman on the job and for welfare policy concerning women workers. Their duties might include the planning of training methods, job analysis and conversion, rating, promotion, and plant housekeeping, varying from plant to plant.

The value of a qualified woman acting in an executive or consultative supervising capacity was in theory recognised generally by industry; and substantial numbers of war plants visited by the Women's Bureau had women acting in either one or both capacities.<sup>2</sup>

Women counsellors had a less definite status than women supervisors and they usually had no authority as production supervisors. They acted in a liaison role between the women workers and the management. When women were drawn in great numbers into war industry, it became desirable to have a woman appointed especially to look out for the welfare of these new workers, some of whom had never before been in a factory, to report to the management on specific problems concerning the work of the women, to give suggestions on changes that might be necessary in the factory facilities, on different arrangements in working conditions, and even on re-engineering of work operations. The women counsellors had also to advise women workers about their difficulties with housekeeping and shopping, and the care of their children. In addition, they served to better employer-employee relations and explained to the workers the personnel policies and rules of the company, especially those concerned with safety and conduct.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Office of War Information, War Manpower Commission, press release, 3 Dec. 1943.

<sup>2</sup> Office of War Information, U.S. Department of Labor, press release, 28 May 1943.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, Women's Bureau: *An Effective Employee Counsellor System* (multilithed), Dec. 1943; *Women in Personnel and Industrial Relations Work in War Industries* (Mar. 1943); *Management Review*, Feb. 1943, pp. 78-80.

*Maternity Protection in Industry:*

The influx of women and especially married women into employment during the war brought to the fore the need for sound maternity policies in industry, and steps were taken towards the effective protection of maternity among women workers in industry. Six States have legislation affecting the employment of pregnant women (Connecticut, Massachusetts, Missouri, New York, Vermont and Washington) but the pre-natal and post-natal leave requirements vary widely: pre-natal leave is for 2 weeks in Massachusetts and Vermont, 3 weeks in Missouri, 4 weeks in Connecticut and 4 months in Washington, while post-natal leave varies from 3 to 6 weeks.<sup>1</sup>

In order to learn the policies concerning this matter in industrial establishments, the Children's Bureau, in December 1942 and January 1943, made a study of the policies in 70 industrial plants employing about 250,000 women, in 11 States in various sections of the country.

All but a few of the establishments had formulated policies regarding maternity among their employees. Those with definite policies either discharged women immediately on learning, or shortly after learning, that they were pregnant (with the result that women who had to work were likely to conceal their pregnancy as long as possible and to leave without reporting their condition) or required them to take a leave of absence at the fourth or eighth month of pregnancy; this leave generally lasted for a specified period after delivery. Reasons for granting the leave were, obviously, the protection of the health of the prospective mother and her child, the risk of having pregnant women in the plants, the diminished efficiency of a pregnant employee, and certain "aesthetic and moral" questions which were brought up.

In several plants that had a high percentage of returns to work, reinstatement and seniority privileges were effective for only two to three months after childbirth. Some plants had made efforts to transfer pregnant women employed on hazardous work to lighter jobs, but it was alleged that finding jobs to which pregnant women could be transferred was a difficult problem. Several plants, through co-operation between the plant medical department and outside physicians, provided pre-natal care, but it was felt as a rule that it was not within the province of an industrial medical department to give pre-natal care.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *The Law and Women's Work, op. cit.*, pp. 104-107.

<sup>2</sup> *The Child*, Aug. 1943, p. 20.

In July 1942, the Children's Bureau and the Women's Bureau issued a statement of "Standards for Maternity Care, and Employment of Mothers in Industry".<sup>1</sup> It recommended facilities for adequate pre-natal care; no work between midnight and 6 a.m.; no working hours longer than an 8-hour day and 48-hour week; at least two rest periods in each shift; transfer from hazardous jobs; and at least six weeks' leave before the physician expects delivery, with more leave on his recommendation; if the mother must return to work, she should have at least two months' leave after delivery, or more on the physician's recommendation. The provisions for maternity care and maternity leave should not endanger the woman's job nor her seniority privileges.

As a conclusion to the report on its survey of 70 plants, the Children's Bureau expressed its view of a sound industrial maternity policy which should involve: (a) no dismissal or unfavourable treatment of pregnant women workers; (b) a health evaluation of each case; (c) a job evaluation of each case and, if necessary, transfer to suitable, non-hazardous work; (d) periodic reports on physical condition; (e) reasonable and protective minimum pre-natal and post-natal leave periods; (f) job protection for a reasonable time; and (g) co-operation among plant physicians, private practitioners, and public health departments.<sup>2</sup>

The standards developed by the Children's Bureau and the Women's Bureau cover essentially the actual employment of women workers during a part of the period of pregnancy. Another aspect of maternity protection in industry is the safeguarding of women's security of employment, maternity leave and seniority rights. These questions, it is generally thought, should be dealt with through collective bargaining, where such a system exists.

Few union contracts provide specifically for maternity leave. In the course of a study made by the Women's Bureau covering war-industry unions in the Mid-West, it was found that only 5 out of 92 contracts had such provisions. But many contracts specify leave of absence for sickness or for other valid personal reasons. Such clauses were, in certain instances, construed as covering maternity leave, but there was no assurance that this interpretation was always given. According to another survey on sick-leave provisions in union agreements, it was found that only a small proportion of agreements specifically mentioned maternity leave. The length of the period during which seniority rights were protected ranged from 8 weeks to 2 years, but it was frequently not clear whether seniority accumulated or was "frozen" from the

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<sup>1</sup> *The Child*, Oct. 1942, p. 49.

<sup>2</sup> *Idem*, Aug. 1943, pp. 23-24.

date of leaving the job. Maternity-leave provisions were "frequent" in the non-ferrous metals and machinery industries and among office and professional occupations.<sup>1</sup>

For these reasons, trade unions as well as the Women's Bureau initiated, in 1944, action with a view to including maternity clauses in union contracts.

Some unions, such as the United Electrical Workers of America and the United Automobile Workers of America (both C.I.O.) adopted the policy of incorporating clauses specifically covering maternity leave in all contract proposals.

In co-operation with representatives from organised groups (both A.F. of L. and C.I.O.) which have a significant female membership, the Women's Bureau developed standards for union contract provisions affecting women. Recommendations pertaining to maternity leave were formulated as follows:

Pregnancy shall not be grounds for dismissal of any woman employee. If the work in which such employee is customarily engaged is, in the opinion of her physician, rendered difficult or dangerous because of her condition, the company shall, upon receipt of such physician's written statement, transfer her to suitable work.

Any woman employee who is pregnant shall, upon presentation of doctor's certificate stating the probable date of her confinement, be granted maternity leave of not less than 6 weeks before delivery and 2 months after delivery. Additional leave up to a total of one year shall be granted at such employee's request, upon presentation of a doctor's certificate stating the necessity therefor. Any woman employee who is absent from work on maternity leave shall continue to accumulate seniority during the first 3½ months of her absence and thereafter shall retain her full seniority until the expiration of one year from date of leaving. At such employee's written request, all unused sick leave allowance with pay in both the current and preceding years, and all or any part of her current unused vacation allowance with pay, shall be charged to maternity leave and compensation accordingly shall be paid to her at the beginning of leave.

Any woman employee absent on maternity leave shall, upon returning to work, be returned to her former job at a rate of pay not less than currently paid on the job at which she was formerly employed; or if such work is not available or not suitable, she shall be transferred to another job of equivalent value, providing that such transfer shall not be made against her consent and shall not involve work for which she is not qualified.<sup>2</sup>

There remains still another question, that of economic aid for the woman worker during the period of incapacitation. In fact, very few contracts provide for maternity leave with pay.<sup>3</sup> The various health insurance plans, the use of which has been growing

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<sup>1</sup> Sophia F. McDOWELL: "Sick Leave Provisions in Union Agreements", prepared by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Industrial Relations Division, in *Monthly Labor Review*, May 1945, pp. 1023-1024. This survey covered 5,000 agreements, 350 of which provided paid sick leave.

<sup>2</sup> *Suggested Standards for Union Contract Provisions Affecting Women*, op. cit.

<sup>3</sup> Sophia F. McDOWELL, loc. cit.

among industrial workers, sometimes specifically exclude maternity from the coverage of the plan. In a large number of plans, maternity is not mentioned, though it might be construed to be covered. The most frequent provision for cash sickness benefits is for a 13-week period, but in the case of the maternity benefits, this is reduced in most instances to 6 weeks. The situation on this question may be thus summarised:

Although the use of such industrial group health plans is increasing, and hundreds of thousands of workers are now under their provisions, the question of financial security for the working mother during periods of unemployability through child-bearing has scarcely been touched. The benefits, when they do cover maternity, are small and of short duration; many women cannot take advantage of them and they are almost never augmented by a continuation of wages during maternity leave.<sup>1</sup>

### *Care for Children of Working Women.*

More and more married women entered industry during the war as the other sources of labour supply were practically depleted. If women's efficiency was to be maintained, their children must not be a source of overstrain and worry, leading inevitably to frequent absence and reduced production.

As early as 31 July-1 August 1941, a conference under the auspices of the Children's Bureau met in Washington; its concern was the day care of children of working mothers. The conference adopted recommendations that were sent to State departments of Labor, Health, and Welfare, and to other State and local agencies, urging them to integrate all activities for child care and to take steps for their development within a comprehensive community programme for public and private family assistance. The recommendations of the conference were endorsed by the Bureau of Employment Security (Social Security Board, Federal Security Agency) which, in a communication to State Employment Security agencies, called for full co-operation with local agencies planning community programmes for the day care of children. The United States Office of Education, the Work Projects Administration, and the Children's Bureau organised a joint planning board that could help the States to meet emergency needs and give them assistance and counsel in developing various day-care services.<sup>2</sup>

After the conference, the necessity of expanding child-care services was frequently emphasised. For example, the Ninth National Conference on Labor Legislation, on 18 November 1942,

<sup>1</sup> *The Child*, May 1945, p. 169.

<sup>2</sup> *Proceedings of the Conference on Day Care of Children of Working Mothers, with Special Reference to Defense Areas* (Children's Bureau publication No. 281, 31 July, 1 Aug. 1941).

outlined policies as regards employment of women with young children and urged that the States and the federal Government should provide leadership and financial assistance to supplement local resources<sup>1</sup>; the Board of Directors of the National Federation of Settlements, in their meeting on 9-10 January, recognised that limitations and safeguards such as "adequate facilities for day care of children from 2 to 14 years, careful supervision of all child-care services and the provisions of information and counselling service for mothers should be planned on a community-wide basis".<sup>2</sup>

Moreover, the War Manpower Commission issued on 12 August 1942 its Directive No. IX on employment in industry of women with young children, to certain Government departments and agencies "to develop, integrate, and co-ordinate federal programmes for the day care of children of working mothers".<sup>3</sup> It stressed that "such facilities should be developed as community projects and not under the auspices of individual employers or employer groups".

For a period of 10 months in 1942 and 1943, the President of the United States allocated from his Emergency Fund \$400,000 to the Office of Defense Health and Welfare Services. These funds were allocated to a limited number of States as grants-in-aid to be administered through the State Department of Welfare (for operation of plans approved by the Chief of the Children's Bureau) and through the State Departments of Education (under plans approved by the United States Commissioner of Education). By May 1943, as many as 33 State Departments of Education and 28 State Departments of Welfare (in 38 States, the District of Columbia, and Hawaii) had received grants from the allocation of the President.<sup>4</sup>

Even before the war nursery schools had been provided, through the Work Projects Administration, for children (of 2 to 4 years of age) of mothers below a certain income level; this programme was discontinued in June 1943. Federal funds were thereafter allocated under the Lanham Act, under the jurisdiction of the Federal Works Agency, for the accommodation of children of working mothers in defence industries.<sup>5</sup>

Lack of personnel and of financial aid was the chief problem in the organisation of a wide system of day-care centres for children. And in many places, even when day nurseries were available—

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<sup>1</sup> *The Child*, Dec. 1942, pp. 86 and 91.

<sup>2</sup> *Idem*, Apr. 1943, p. 151.

<sup>3</sup> *Idem*, Oct. 1942, pp. 50-51.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 51; *Education for Victory*, 15 June 1943, p. 15.

<sup>5</sup> *Congressional Record*, 78th Congress, 1st Session, 30 June 1943; *The Child*, Aug. 1943, p. 24.

which was not always the case, especially in small communities where new plants had been located—there was little or no provision for children of school age. Funds allocated by the Federal Works Agency during the fiscal year 1942-43 provided assistance for only 75,000 children from 2 to 5 years old and 105,000 school-age children.<sup>1</sup>

In April 1944, 2,428 nursery schools and child-care centres were operated under this scheme, nearly two thirds of which were in labour shortage areas (Group I) and in labour stringency areas (Group II); 78,476 children were enrolled in these centres on 5 April.<sup>2</sup> On 28 June 1944, 1,700 nursery school units, with an enrolment of 50,929 children, and 1,295 centres for school-age children, with an enrolment of 57,228, were in operation.<sup>3</sup>

In many States there exists legislation regulating part-time care of children that provides for licensing and supervision of child-caring institutions and boarding homes for children, but the scope of the laws and the procedures authorised were in a number of cases seriously inadequate for war-emergency demands.<sup>4</sup> Schemes were initiated throughout the country by State, municipal and private agencies to provide care to children of working mothers. State Committees on Children in Wartime, organised under the State Defense Councils with the purpose of furthering broad programmes of child welfare, and including care of children of working mothers, were appointed in 27 States and the District of Columbia in June 1943.<sup>5</sup>

New York City offers an example of the type of action which was taken. A committee on the care of young children in wartime was established in June 1942, in order to co-ordinate the activities of several federal, municipal, citizen and labour union groups.<sup>6</sup> In September 1942, the Civilian Defense Volunteer Office created a branch for child-care development and protection, devoted to recruiting, training, placement, and help, with volunteer workers in various aspects of child care.<sup>7</sup> In October of the same year the Mayor of New York City appointed a committee under the chairmanship of the Commissioner of Welfare to co-ordinate all efforts in the field of child care for working mothers in defence industries,

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<sup>1</sup> C.I.O. News, 30 Aug. 1943, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Service for Children of Working Mothers in Wartime* (Office of Civilian Defense, June 1943), p. 19; Office of War Information, War Manpower Commission, press release, 30 Apr. 1944.

<sup>3</sup> Information communicated by the Women's Bureau.

<sup>4</sup> *The Child*, Jan. 1943, pp. 97-98.

<sup>5</sup> *Idem*, July 1943, p. 12.

<sup>6</sup> *New York Times*, 1 June 1942.

<sup>7</sup> *Idem*, 20 Sept. 1942.

and to advise him on all plans involving requests for federal financial help.<sup>1</sup>

In Minneapolis, as another instance, several child-care centres were opened, one as early as the beginning of 1942. The staff included volunteer nurses and household aides, full-time paid teachers and volunteer teachers. An executive committee was responsible for the development and supervision of additional centres; it comprised the chairman of the Defense Council's Welfare Section, the assistant superintendent of the Department of Education in charge of elementary education, a representative of the Federal Works Administration, and the Secretary of Case Work and Relief Division of the Council of Social Agencies and the Welfare Section of the Defense Council.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Idem*, 23 Oct. 1942.

<sup>2</sup> *Monthly Labor Review*, July 1943, p. 107.



## CHAPTER III

### WOMEN IN TRADE UNIONS

Before the war, increase in women membership of unions was more noticeable in the non-manufacturing industries, such as retail trade, laundry, and among clerical employees, than in the manufacturing industries. As for the latter, certain industries employed more women than others, and had large union membership; it can be assumed therefore that most of the organised factory women were to be found in these industries, which included textiles, apparel and other fabricated textile products, food products, the electrical equipment industries, printing and allied industries, leather goods, tobacco and tobacco products and rubber products.

Before the United States' formal entrance into World War II, the onrush of orders for war material from foreign countries caused employers to expand their working forces, and intensified union efforts at organising workers. With the declaration of war by the United States, mass recruiting for war jobs led to mass organisation of workers, chiefly as a result of the Government's recognition of collective bargaining and of the National War Labor Board's policy on maintenance of membership.

#### INCREASE IN NUMBERS

Thousands of women flocking into war jobs immediately became members of unions. The number of women in unions jumped from about 800,000 before the war to an estimated 3,000,000 or more, in 1944. While this increase cannot be accounted for solely by the number of women entering factory occupations, it is probably true that the majority of new women union members were to be found in the following unions: the Federal Unions<sup>1</sup>; International Association of Machinists; International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers; United Automobile Workers; United Automobile, Aircraft

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<sup>1</sup> Unions directly chartered by the American Federation of Labor. (These are not unions of employees of the federal Government, who are organised under the American Federation of Government Employees, the National Federation of Federal Employees, and the United Federal Workers of America.)

and Agricultural Implement Workers; United Electrical, Radio, and Machine Workers; United Farm Equipment and Metal Workers; United Rubber Workers; and United Steelworkers.

There was a steady increase in numbers of women in the old-line unions found in the woman-employing industries, such as men's clothing, women's clothing, textiles, canneries, retail and wholesale trade, and offices<sup>1</sup>, but of special interest in the consideration of women in trade unions during the war period are the following statements which the U.S. Women's Bureau received from officials of the international unions named, concerning the number of women in their membership towards the end of the war:

United Automobile, Aircraft and Agricultural Implement Workers: about 30 per cent. are women; some estimates show number of women as high as 350,000.

United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America: about 40 per cent. of the 683,000 members are women; over half have come into this industry since the United States entered the war.

United Steelworkers of America: on 1 September 1944, the U.S.A. locals in the basic steel industry had 59,636 women, or 11.9 per cent. of total. Applying this ratio to total U.S.A. membership (workers in basic steel and in allied metal-working industries), there are approximately 95,000 women members in the United Steelworkers.

United Farm Equipment and Metal Workers: in the four mid-western States where a large number of the plants in the farm equipment industry are located, now engaged primarily in war production, women comprised over 15 per cent. of the union membership; this proportion varied greatly between the plants, being as high as 50 per cent. in some.

United Rubber Workers of America: no estimate for women in the union's membership in the country as a whole is obtainable. In the Akron (Ohio) area—the centre of the rubber industry in the United States—in the fall of 1944 women comprised over 25 per cent. of the union membership.

The following items taken from the newspapers of unions or daily papers give a picture of women in positions of importance and responsibility in union affairs:

At the first constitutional convention of the United Steelworkers of America, in 1942, at least 19 women delegates attended.

In August 1943 women attended the convention of the Industrial Union of Marine and Shipbuilding Workers for the first time.

At the first annual Educational Conference of the United Automobile, Aircraft and Agricultural Implement Workers, held in Chicago in February 1944, 300 women delegates attended.

A survey of the United Automobile, Aircraft and Agricultural Workers showed that 73 per cent. of the plants organised by this union had women shop stewards.

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<sup>1</sup> Some advance was made during the war regarding the organisation of women domestic workers. Three unions, affiliated with the C.I.O., have been created since 1943 in Washington (D.C.), Baltimore (Md.), and Louisville (Ky.). Cf. *Monthly Labor Review*, Mar. 1945, pp. 583-584.

The first woman seated as a delegate to the Teamsters Joint Council of Chicago was in December 1943.

Of 38 members elected to the C.I.O. Executive Board, one is a woman (in October 1944 she was elected president of the United Federal Workers of America).

About 17 per cent. of the national staff of the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers were women, in February 1943, compared with 2 per cent. a year earlier. During 1942, 14 women gave up jobs to take full-time paid union work with the U.E.W. In the spring of 1944, the U.E.W. stated that, besides having many women shop stewards, women held local office, some of them as presidents of locals. About 35 per cent. of their national full-time organisers were women. A woman was secretary of one of the districts of the U.E.W.

In one large industrial State (California) on the West Coast, where industrialisation was greatly accelerated by the war, woman membership in unions increased from 10 per cent. in 1942 to 17 per cent. in 1943, according to the Industrial Welfare Commission. The proportionate strength of women in unions in the larger woman-employing industries in 1943 was as follows:

Manufacturing . . . . .	19.0
Textiles and apparel . . . . .	74.7
Food and tobacco . . . . .	50.2
Metal and machinery . . . . .	13.5
Aircraft, ships, other transportation equipment . . . . .	11.4
Non-manufacturing . . . . .	15.7
Hotels, eating and drinking places . . . . .	37.8
Trade . . . . .	34.5
Motion picture theatres and other entertainment . . . . .	15.1

#### OPENING OF UNION MEMBERSHIP TO WOMEN

One of the early problems for the employer in the war period was the question of certain unions opening membership to women for the first time. Manpower shortage forced the acceptance of women by old-line craft unions in areas where war production was being retarded; during the years before World War II women had not especially sought employment in these fields.

Unions affiliated with the Congress of Industrial Organizations were not faced with this question; women were always admitted to C.I.O. locals, if women were employed, since they were industrial unions.

Within the first year after the declaration of war, some locals of the following A.F. of L. international unions announced admission of women to membership, although in many cases this was "for the duration" only: the International Association of Machinists; Teamsters Union; International Moulders and Foundry Workers; International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, Iron Shipbuilders and

Helpers; Ironworkers Union; and the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners.

The United Mine Workers, then independent, amended its constitution in 1942 to permit women to join. Their general union (District 50) covers a variety of industries, and, in some of these, women were employed in increasing numbers, such as chemicals and cosmetics.

Railroad unions also accepted women as members, some "for the duration". Early in 1943 the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen took in women, and by the summer of that year women were found in the following unions in some railroad systems: Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees; Brotherhood of Railway Clerks; and the Order of Railroad Telegraphers.

The System Federation contracts on some railroads cover most of the skilled workers in railroad shops. The following craft unions are represented: International Association of Machinists; International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers; Sheet Metal Workers' Association; International Brotherhood of Firemen, Oilers, Helpers and Railway Shop Employees; Brotherhood of Blacksmiths, Drop Forgers and Helpers; and Brotherhood of Railway Carmen. The four first-named always have admitted women to membership on the same basis as men. Women were then admitted "for the duration" to the Brotherhood of Railroad Shop Crafts, which is the union comprising the workers employed in the Pennsylvania Railroad System.

The question whether women shall be admitted to full apprenticeship and journeymen jobs has not been settled, nor were women as "helpers" accepted in some instances for longer than the duration of the war.

#### PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN UNION AFFAIRS

Although growth of women membership in unions brought with it increased participation and interest by them in union organisation, attention must be called to some of the barriers to their securing full participation.

It must be recognised that a considerable number of women went into war jobs for patriotic reasons and for the high wages offered, and these have evinced but little interest in the union programme. This can be said also of many of the men who came into the union as new members during the war period; some of them came from nearby farms and expected to return to farming and were therefore not interested in a programme to give protection to workers in the post-war period.

On the other hand, women who for a long time have been members of unions are more apt to be interested in the union, because they have benefited by increased wages and improved working conditions secured by the union. However, many of these women often carried home responsibilities, and this burden, intensified by added wartime difficulties in shopping and marketing, left literally no extra time for them even to attend union meetings. They did not therefore get a very clear understanding of the new, broader union programme. At the same time, in the plant the women complained that they did not receive the same pay for work which was identical or comparable with that performed by men and that "the union did nothing about it".

Partly owing to inexperience, and to the feeling on the part of some that they are in industry only temporarily, women, in the majority of locals, were reluctant to accept responsibility in union affairs. They refused to run for office. Frequently the men evidenced antagonism and opposed women taking office. In the war-plant unions, where large numbers of women workers were new, women were more often found as stewards; but very few were officers, or on bargaining and grievance committees. A study by the U.S. Women's Bureau in three mid-western States showed that out of 90 unions only 4 had women as presidents.

Union leaders did not at first recognise that women had any problems different from those of the men. However, this attitude changed as men here and there realised that large numbers of women might be leaving the labour market with an anti-union bias, and, they also realised that women could aid as voters in securing the passage of social legislation. Old methods of organising them and developing leadership were not proving effective. Some unions began to look for new methods of reaching and interesting the women.

#### SPECIAL PROGRAMMES AND POLICIES FOR WOMEN

Programmes were planned which aimed specifically at drawing women into positions of leadership in union affairs, and at meeting women's out-of-plant problems—one of the main reasons why women had not taken a more active interest. By the autumn of 1944 more women were employed as organisers, and as staff members responsible for working with women members, both on problems in the plant and outside in the community.

Policies enunciated at a number of 1944 conferences and conventions indicate the new attention women are receiving in

union programmes. Trends can be illustrated by the following instances:

The United Automobile, Aircraft and Agricultural Implement Workers has set up a women's bureau in its War Policy Division "to help local unions in developing special appeals to women members, many of whom are new to industry and to unionism, and to increase their participation in general union activities". The women's bureau will develop a programme centring around the impact of women workers on wage standards, seniority patterns, inner union structure, and other organisational problems. It will assist in working out specific recommendations on questions such as maternity leave, rest periods, safety standards and other problems relating to the employment of women.

At a recent conference of this union, a resolution was passed, among others, that women organisers be added to the United Automobile Workers staff for concentration on organising the unorganised women workers and helping solve their special problems. The discussion from the floor of the convention by women delegates demanded that women organisers be placed in the various regional offices where they can do the most good.

The United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers has attempted to solve the community problems of women as well as their in-plant problems. Child-care programmes have been supported in different parts of the country, efforts taken to change hours of stores so women could do shopping, special recreation arranged for women on the second and third shifts, and aid given in housing and transportation problems. An official stated, "one can generally say that we have decided that any problem of a member was not too big or too little for the union to concern itself with".

The United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers also are "consistently following a policy of paying special attention to training women so that [they] can take over the jobs of men within the union when those go into the armed services".

The United Farm Equipment and Metal Workers (C.I.O.) at its convention (October 1944) passed a resolution that the "organisation give special attention to the setting up everywhere of community facilities specially intended to solve the problems of women workers, such as child-care centres, extended school services and community kitchens".

At this same convention, the union "[welcomed] women into leading positions in our union, up to and including the very highest, and [urged] on the locals the desirability of having women stewards and committee-women in departments which have considerable numbers of women". A special women's committee was to be established to make recommendations on organisational measures to increase the participation and membership of women.

### SENIORITY

The principle of seniority is accepted generally as being fair to all, *i.e.*, that employees most recently hired are the first ones laid off when production is reduced. But discrimination arises in unions where contract clauses provide for separate seniority for men and women, and, further, in unions where interpretation of the general seniority clause results in unfair lay-offs of women.

The practice of maintaining separate seniority lists for men and women has been supported in many instances in the past by both

management and unions. Provisions have been written into some union agreements limiting the seniority privileges of women, and the employment of married women, to the duration of the war.

In some instances, both union and management officials during the war period expressed opposition to the continued employment of women in large numbers, regardless of any seniority. This was largely in heavy industries where the work is dirty and previously had been considered too heavy and therefore "unsuitable" for women. However, many jobs were re-engineered so that women were doing them, and they demanded that the union protect them in these jobs, especially with a guarantee for equal job opportunity in the post-war period.

In plants where separate seniority lists for men and women were maintained during the war period, women workers who were transferred to jobs formerly reserved for men continued to accumulate seniority on their old jobs and acquired only temporary wartime seniority in their new positions. The traditional jobs using women in the past in these plants were small in number and relatively few women were employed. For many thousands of women, therefore, there will be no "old" jobs to which they could return—first, because they had never been employed on them and so have no right to them, and secondly, because there would not be enough old jobs to absorb them. Moreover, the question of unemployment compensation becomes important to women when they are laid off, and there is little evidence that unions are giving sufficient attention to securing just interpretation of the State unemployment compensation laws, with special reference to suitability of employment and to married women.

Equal seniority for women, however, exists under many union agreements, and action on the subject has been taken at executive board meetings of several international unions, as the following examples indicate:

The International Association of Machinists has admitted women to membership always on the same basis as men, with no separate seniority list. This is true also of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

The International Executive Board of the United Automobile, Aircraft and Agricultural Implement Workers, early in 1944, recommended the following policy regarding women's seniority:

(1) Plants in which no female employees were working on production prior to the war production programme, or in which female employees were not divided into separate, non-interchangeable occupational groups: male and female employees shall not be divided into separate non-interchangeable occupational seniority groups.

(2) Plants in which female employees were divided into non-interchangeable occupational seniority groups prior to the war production programme: the matter

of seniority shall be handled through local negotiations in keeping with the local plant situation.

By the late autumn of 1944, autonomy had been given to local unions in the matter as to whether there shall be separate seniority lists.

The General Executive Board of the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers adopted a statement, also early in 1944, urging locals to be particularly vigilant in relation to women's seniority and job rights when faced with cutbacks and lay-offs. "It is this union's position that members, regardless of sex, have equal rights under the contracts and within the union. This applies to seniority as well as other questions."

Some union officials, both A.F. of L. and C.I.O., while accepting the policy of equal seniority between men and women, have at the same time supported certain locals in their intent not to work with women where the latter were not employed before the war. Other union officials have refused to admit that large numbers of jobs, on which women have proved their ability during the war period, are suitable for them; still other union officials do not take a strong position to prevent women being laid off when men with less seniority are kept or are called back.

#### EQUAL PAY

Many international unions have enunciated policies favouring "equal pay" for women doing work comparable to that performed by men. But neither the union's nor the Government's "equal pay" policy is self-operating and local union action is necessary to put that policy into effect.

It is still true that not all union contracts called for the rate for the job regardless of sex. Even in some instances where there was an equal-pay clause in the contract, the job and rate sheet showed job classification by sex. Again, when equality in wages was agreed on, the clause written into the contract was often on a sex basis, so that, although the wages were equal during the life of that contract, the principle of sex differentiation was maintained.

Sometimes local unions in bargaining did not put up a sufficiently strong fight for "equal pay" and men leaders sacrificed women's interests in favour of other seemingly more important objectives. In cases placed before the National War Labor Board because agreement with the employer could not be reached, unions were not always insistent on obtaining fair wage rates for women workers. Usually their request was limited to securing "equal pay" for women on "men's jobs". The unions did almost nothing towards eliminating notorious discriminations against women in both



women's traditional jobs and in so-called "women's" departments of a plant. They also neglected in many instances the importance of an equal starting rate for inexperienced workers.

It should not be overlooked that unions worked to secure the recent "equal pay" laws passed by several States. For example, in the State of Washington the Building Service Employees International Union took the initiative and was directly responsible for enactment of the law in 1943; and in Illinois, in the same year, the State Federation of Labor and the State Industrial Union Council made particular effort to get a good equal-pay law enacted (although another bill was substituted at the last minute).

Alert union leaders endeavoured to accomplish "equal pay" in actual practice. As an example, women in one plant who took up their complaint on equal pay through the regular grievance procedure received over \$900 in back pay. Other examples are as follows:

Many locals of A.F. of L. unions took women into membership on the basis of equal pay for equal work. It has been the policy of the International Association of Machinists to secure in their agreement the rate of the job regardless of sex. The United Automobile Workers and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers maintain this policy on jobs where men and women perform the same work.

An official of the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers (C.I.O.) stated that in those plants organised by the U.E.W. the union has "consistently followed a policy of equal pay for equal work . . . Most contracts being written in our union today, numbering several hundreds, provide for equal pay for equal work".

The United Farm Equipment and Metal Workers (C.I.O.) passed a resolution at its second biennial convention (1944) that "the principle of equal pay for equal work with no discrimination on account of sex be incorporated in all our contracts" and they "establish a special women's committee to study this question . . .".

The United Automobile, Aircraft and Agricultural Implement Workers (C.I.O.), in its resolutions affecting women members adopted at the 1944 convention, stated that "women workers must receive fair and just treatment . . . by the strict enforcement of equal pay for equal work".

The United Steelworkers of America (C.I.O.) generally have maintained the rate for the job, with no classification by sex.

The influence of collective bargaining on the application of the principle of equal pay may be illustrated by the findings of an enquiry made in New York State in December 1943, when 143 plants were visited in order to make a sample survey on wages of women working on men's jobs. Of the 143 plants, 98 had union agreements covering occupations in which women had replaced men; 22 of these contracts specifically provided lower wage rates for women workers, while 73 contracts provided for equal pay

for equal work or for specified job rates, without mention of the sex of the worker. Women received entrance rates equal to men's for comparable work in two thirds of the plants having union agreements and in less than one half of the plants with no union agreement. Of the non-manufacturing industries, about one half of the 56 firms which were visited were operating under union contracts, and approximately two thirds of the cases of lower entrance rates for women were recorded by firms which had no union contracts.<sup>1</sup>

### UPGRADING AND PROMOTION

One of the ways in which women were widely discriminated against was the failure to upgrade them to higher paying jobs, and to receive merit increases within job classifications. Women were kept in the lower grades, and too often unions did not press for their promotion. They were not upgraded from jobs in women's departments to jobs in men's departments which they could perform. In some plants it was understood between union and management that a woman would not be put on a man's job if a man was available, even though it was a job which she could perform.

Generally speaking, the women themselves did not make demands for upgrading, or for being placed on men's jobs, or for merit increases when they were due. Many women were still afraid of losing their jobs. While other jobs might be available, women workers employed near their homes preferred not to travel any further distance to work, because of home responsibilities. Such women did not make known their complaints to union or foremen, if they believed the foremen were looking for some reason to ease women out of the plant.

In addition, some women, usually those new in the labour market and especially those coming from low-paid service jobs, felt at first that they were making "pretty good money" and they were not conscious that they were kept on the low-paying jobs. Also, there was widespread ignorance among women about the more skilled and better paying jobs in other departments which they were qualified to perform and could do. Again, if they did chance to know of these opportunities of upgrading, they complained among themselves that they were being discriminated against, but they did not take up the matter with the union.

Instances where local union leaders did outstanding work in seeing that women got merit increases and were upgraded to

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<sup>1</sup> *Women's Wages in Men's Jobs, op. cit.*

better paying jobs on the same basis as men appeared in reports coming to the U.S. Women's Bureau during 1943 and 1944. In certain plants the union programme of upgrading by seniority held for women as for men. Cases can be cited, too, where the union encouraged upgrading of women, but was not successful in accomplishing it with management; sometimes the union found that it always had to press for the upgrading of women and that the company protested every time that such a request was presented.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Sources, unless otherwise stated: reports and proceedings of conventions and conferences of international unions, National War Labor Board cases, union agreements examined by Women's Bureau agents, correspondence with union officials in Women's Bureau files, interviews by Women's Bureau agents with union officials at local headquarters, and statements from women union members to Women's Bureau agents (communicated to the I.L.O. by the Women's Bureau).

## CHAPTER IV

### WOMEN IN EMPLOYMENT OTHER THAN INDUSTRY

#### WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

The expansion of the female agricultural labour force, which has already been mentioned, meant active recruitment, not only among the agricultural, but also among the urban female population. In May 1943, according to the Bureau of the Census, the influx of students and housewives into farm work was the main cause of the increase of 900,000 in total employment. This labour proved efficient and appeals were made for 800,000 women to work in agriculture in the spring and summer of 1944.<sup>1</sup> In particular areas, women were recruited during emergencies from neighbouring towns and villages, and in extreme cases women were transferred from cities. This abnormal use of women workers in agriculture, especially temporary workers, created special wartime problems. In view of the increasing use of women workers on farms, the Women's Bureau published a series of principles which should govern the recruitment and the employment of these women. It stressed in particular the need for orderly and systematic recruitment according to the actual needs in the area, and the utilisation of the experience and the machinery of the Employment Service, which is equipped for collecting comprehensive information and determining the need for women workers, as well as for placing available workers. Since conditions of work in agriculture are only loosely regulated, the Women's Bureau set forth a number of standards of employment for women workers and emphasised the principle that the employment of women in agriculture should under no circumstances be permitted to lower existing standards of wages and working conditions. Since there is no national minimum wage law for farm workers, and no wage order has been issued (although some State minimum-wage laws permit the fixing of rates for women in agriculture), it was proposed that the

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<sup>1</sup> BUREAU OF THE CENSUS: *Labor Force Bulletin and Monthly Report of the Labor Force* (Special Surveys, MRLF No. 27, 13 Sept. 1944); *Monthly Labor Review*, June 1944, p. 1248.

federal Fair Labor Standards Act should serve as a guide for the establishment of minimum wage standards (this Act, incidentally, covers most large canneries, as well as other manufacturing establishments). The recommendation was all the more justified in that, in many areas, the same workers were employed alternatively on the farms and on neighbouring canneries, and that the payment of the same wages for farm as for work in canneries might help to attract a sufficient number of workers, at harvest time particularly. It was also recommended that voluntary wage standards should be maintained for all farm workers.

Other recommendations included an 8-hour day and 48-hour week, except in cases of limited emergency; if the emergency required overtime for several days, compensating time off should be allowed during the same or the following week, to assure recuperation from physical strain; one day of rest in seven should be observed; and transportation, housing and supervision requirements for groups of women working on farms were also dealt with. Close co-operation between women's organisations and local farm placement offices of the Employment Service and agricultural war boards (set up by the Department of Agriculture) was advised for putting this programme of recruitment and employment into effect.<sup>1</sup>

### *The Women's Land Army*

In addition, a special body of women was organised during the war for work in agriculture. The Women's Land Army was created in April 1943 as a part of the United States Crop Corps, which was established in April 1942. Only women over 18 years of age were accepted for the Women's Land Army; women were also eligible for the Crop Corps, which included all types of farm workers—experienced and inexperienced, and part-time and full-time workers. The goal set at first by the Department of Agriculture for the membership of the Women's Land Army was 50,000. On 1 July 1943 more than 60,000 women were enrolled; 5,000 were engaged for year-round farm work. These women were in great demand for poultry, dairy, and general-produce farms.

The Women's Land Army members had to provide a doctor's certificate of physical ability to stand hard farm work. They had to accept to work at least one month, and women promising only a month were trained on the job by the farmer. Those who could work longer were trained in 2 to 6-week courses in agricultural colleges and received subsistence allowances during training.

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<sup>1</sup> WOMEN'S BUREAU: *Guides for Wartime Use of Women on Farms* (1942).

Whenever possible, seasonal workers were recruited locally for the W.L.A., in order to avoid housing and transportation problems. But wherever an emergency arose, plans were made to recruit labour from nearby areas. In 1943 there were camps run by the Department of Agriculture Extension Service. In 7 States Women were recruited, placed, and housed by State and County Agricultural Extension Agents, working closely with the United States Employment Service, and, in some cases, with local defence councils.

Most of the work of the seasonal employees of the Women's Land Army in camps could be learned by inexperienced women through instruction on the job; they picked berries, cut asparagus, transplanted tomatoes, and harvested fruits and vegetables, but they helped also in thinning fruits, and with some additional instruction helped in weeding out diseased plants and detecting and removing infected plants.

Women were recruited from college girls, office, beauty-parlour and shop girls, professional women, school teachers, or housewives and other women who had never been on the labour market.<sup>1</sup>

#### WOMEN IN PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT

In May 1943, women in full-time jobs in the federal executive services numbered 999,500, or 35 per cent. of all full-time employees, against 266,000 or 20 per cent. of all employees, in June 1941, the latest date before the war for which figures are available. Women accounted for over three fifths of the full-time employees in the war emergency agencies, two fifths of those in the War Department, and approximately a fourth of those in the Navy Department and other agencies.<sup>2</sup>

#### WOMEN OFFICE WORKERS

A great number of women were engaged in office positions to fill men's vacancies, and, in many cases, to meet the increasing demands of expanding services in wartime. This trend is illustrated by a study made by the Women's Bureau, which in 1940 included Kansas City in a survey of office work in five representative cities, and in 1942 revisited the Kansas City area to see what changes had taken place in the two years. In addition to revisiting Kansas City offices, first visits were made in 1942 to St. Louis and to

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<sup>1</sup> *New York Times*, 26 May 1943; 18 Aug. 1943 (statement by Miss Florence L. Hall, in charge of the Women's Land Army, Department of Agriculture); Florence L. HALL: "They're Getting in the Crops", in *Independent Woman*, July 1943, p. 194.

<sup>2</sup> *Labor Information Bulletin*, Aug. 1943, p. 6.

several other communities in the same general area. The businesses scheduled were non-manufacturing for the greater part. In all the areas and for all types of offices, women's employment had increased by 32.4 per cent. since 1940; newspaper offices alone indicated a decrease. The largest increases were in air-transportation offices (172 per cent.), banks (133 per cent.), railroad transportation offices (44 per cent.), and insurance companies (38 per cent.). Men's employment in the offices surveyed had decreased by 10 per cent. in the same period. The ratio of women increased from 46.8 per cent. in 1940 to 56.4 per cent. in 1942. In 53 offices, a total of 1,281 men's jobs were reported to have become vacant one or more times in the two years; of 1,224 vacancies filled, practically two thirds (801) were filled by women at the time of the survey. Banks had employed women in a great proportion to fill such vacancies (96 per cent.), but insurance only 43 per cent.

Women engaged to replace men entered office jobs that no women, or very few, had held previously in the firms visited. Therefore, not only were more women employed in jobs they traditionally had held, but women's field of occupations had broadened. In the period considered, women were found for the first time in some instances as tellers, hand-bookkeepers, supervisors, teletype operators, duplicating-machine operators, tonnage clerks, collectors, messengers, and administrative personnel. Upgrading of women has also been the practice more generally than before; through seniority and "bidding-in" (promotion), the companies' own employees often became a source of labour supply, particularly of experienced workers. In many cases vacancies had been filled by a shift upwards, which left vacant jobs that required little training or experience and that women with no such qualifications could fill; experienced women were thus transferred from places within the office, on a bigger scale than before the war. Some of the business offices were training women among their own personnel or kept extra women for upgrading and promotion to men's jobs (tellers, bookkeepers). The scarcity of experienced and qualified personnel led to a somewhat more extensive employment of older women—those over 30.<sup>1</sup>

#### WOMEN IN THE PROFESSIONS

War circumstances also affected the employment of women in the professions, although much less than in industry. But the gains which women have made in this field may well prove permanent.

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<sup>1</sup> *Labor Information Bulletin*, July 1943, p. 6.

*Physicians*

The number of women in the medical profession has never been high in the United States. Only 7,708 women were reported as physicians and surgeons in the Census of 1940, compared to 157,921 men.<sup>1</sup> But it is interesting to see that changes have occurred during the war which may have a lasting influence on the status of women in the profession. Progress was no doubt made as regards the acceptance of women as doctors. Not only have they been accepted in the medical corps of the armed forces, but they have in a number of cases taken over in civilian life the work of physicians who entered the armed forces.

As regards medical students, however, no great increase has been noted in the enrolment of women students. In a survey which covered 15 leading medical colleges in 7 cities, only a "slight increase" was noticeable in 9 schools, while the other 6 reported enrolment at the level of previous years. But the prejudice against women students has been lessening and quota systems, limiting the number of women students to a small percentage, have in some schools been eliminated. Of the 77 schools offering approved training in medicine in the United States in 1941, all but 7 admitted women students before the war; since the war, the number of schools that do not admit women students has been reduced to 4. Among the factors which tend to prevent women from taking up medical studies are the difficulties in getting internship and residence for graduate training, and also the fact that girls in colleges often are not prepared for medicine in science courses, nor are they aware of the opportunities of the medical profession.<sup>2</sup>

In view of the present scarcity of medical staff and of the reduced number of students owing to the induction of many prospective students into the armed forces, and also of the probable expansion of public health work after the war, recruitment of women for medical courses might become a necessity. In 1944 the Assistant Chief of the Children's Bureau made in this connection a public statement in which she urged medical schools and colleges to engage in recruiting campaigns for women students. She also recommended the abolition of the quota system, and advocated the granting of scholarships to women who want to take up the medical profession.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, Bureau of the Census: *Population, Special Reports* (Series P-44, No. 1, 2 Feb. 1944).

<sup>2</sup> WOMEN'S BUREAU: *The Outlook for Women in Occupations in the Medical Services: Women Physicians* (Bulletin 203, No. 7, 1945).

<sup>3</sup> *New York Times*, 6 Sept. 1944.



*Lawyers*

The expansion of governmental and State services, and the drafting of men for the armed forces created a great demand for trained women lawyers. The number of women law students was small, but increasing. Some reduction in the entrance requirements of certain law schools was made and a marked speed-up of courses was noted.

In the federal service, openings for women lawyers were offered particularly in the consumer and social service fields of the federal offices, in the Treasury Department, the Surgeon-General's Office and certain divisions of the War Production Board.

In States, various types of new appointments for women lawyers were recorded, such as the position of Chief Inspector of the Licensing Department, under the Attorney-General (North Dakota); Director of the King's County Legal Aid Bureau, and briefing clerk for a Justice of the Supreme Court (Washington); law clerks to Justices of the State Supreme Court (Louisiana and Missouri); and member of the Public Service Commission (Missouri).

The greatest demands for women lawyers came from war production areas of the East, the North Central States and the Pacific Coast, where women lawyers were chiefly sought for private offices.<sup>1</sup>

*Teachers*

One of the effects of the war on the teaching profession was that many married women entered or returned to teaching. Prejudice against their employment was dropped by many school boards in order to compensate for the loss in men teachers. In 1942 already there was an increase of 109 per cent. in cities of under 2,500 inhabitants and of 4 per cent., in cities of over 100,000 inhabitants, whereas for the entire group of school systems the increase was 20.4 per cent.<sup>2</sup> The percentages of return or entrance in this field show an inverse relation to the size of the city.

## WOMEN IN THE ARMED FORCES

The largest body of women in the armed forces was the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (W.A.A.C.), established by

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<sup>1</sup> *Monthly Labor Review*, Sept. 1943, p. 502.

<sup>2</sup> NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION: "The Nation's Schools after a Year of War", in *Research Bulletin*, Vol. XXI, No. 2, Apr. 1943. The survey covered 20 per cent. of all school systems, but may be considered as representative of the main trends in changes in professional staff.

an Act of 14 May 1942.<sup>1</sup> In March 1943, more than 43,000 women were members of the Corps; in April 1944, 65,000.

A Bill to establish the W.A.A.C. as a part of the Army was passed on 1 July 1943.<sup>2</sup> Known as the W.A.C. (Women's Army Corps), the personnel received the same pay and privileges as the men. The age limits were changed from 21-45 years to 20-50 years. The quota of enlisted or appointed members in this Corps was set at 200,000. This Corps permitted their members to serve outside the continental United States. A classification of the occupations of 24,790 of these women at the beginning of 1943 showed that 44 per cent. were engaged in administrative and clerical work, 15 per cent. in aircraft detection, 6 per cent. in communications, 4 per cent. in food services, 3 per cent. in photography, 3 per cent. in radio, and 1 per cent. in supply and other various occupations. The Air Corps asked for women to be recruited and trained for 25 jobs, among which were parachute rigging, welding, bomb-sight repairing, and other various technical jobs.<sup>3</sup>

Women in the W.A.C. were engaged in a wide variety of army jobs (more than 230 in all) with various departments, including technical and professional occupations, radio and communications work, mechanical and manual trades, administrative and office work, driving, etc.<sup>4</sup>

The Women's Naval Reserve (W.A.V.E.S.) reached a membership of 60,000 in April 1944. Only women between 20 and 36 years of age were accepted as enlisted ratings. Women either single or married (but not to a man in the armed forces) were accepted, but only if they did not leave a child under 18. Enlisted W.A.V.E.S. were required to have at least a high-school diploma or equivalent education. They were assigned to a great number of operations for which, except a few, training was required. The Naval Reserve, for instance, announced in the autumn of 1943 that it especially desired women who had education and experience in the following fields: accounting, aeronautical engineering, astronomy, business statistics, civil, electrical, mechanical and radio engineering, electronics, mathematics, metallurgy, modern languages, or physics.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Public Law 544, 77th Congress, Ch. 312, 2nd Session, 14 May 1942.

<sup>2</sup> Public Law 110, 78th Congress, Ch. 187, 1st Session, 1 July 1943. The Army Nurse Corps, numbering 40,000 in July 1944, have become officers, with full military status, in the U.S. Army, and army nurses have the same standing as members of the W.A.C. under an Executive Order of 22 June 1944; *Monthly Labor Review*, Dec. 1944, p. 1169.

<sup>3</sup> *Hearings before the Committee on Military Affairs*, House of Representatives, 78th Congress, 1st Session, 9 Mar. 1943; 73 *Questions and Answers about the W.A.C.* a Women's Army Corps pamphlet, 1943; *Monthly Labor Review*, June 1944, p. 1247.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *Monthly Labor Review*, Sept. 1943, pp. 577-578; June 1944, p. 1247.

The Women's Division of the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve had 16,500 members in April 1944, and reached its quota of 18,000 by July 1944, since there was no difficulty in securing members for this Corps. The Women's Reserve of the U.S. Coast Guard had a membership of 7,600 in April 1944.<sup>1</sup>

At the beginning of 1943 there were about 25,000 Army and Navy nurses; by June, over 36,000, and the number was still increasing.<sup>2</sup> Army and Navy nurses were permitted to serve outside the continental United States.

Licensed women physicians and surgeons were appointed in the medical department of the United States Army and Navy for the duration of the war and 6 months after.<sup>3</sup> These women received the same pay and allowances, rights, privileges, and benefits as the members of the Officers' Reserve Corps of the Army and the Naval Reserve of the Navy with the same grade and length of service.

#### *Civilian Female Personnel of the Army*<sup>4</sup>

More than half a million civilian women were engaged in clerical, administrative, industrial and mechanical jobs for the Army by August 1943. They made up 38 per cent. of all civilian employees, as compared with 25 per cent. before the order was issued, in August 1942, that women should be allowed to replace men Army employees wherever possible. Thus, by mid-1943, 75 per cent. of the Army Service Forces' civilian personnel in Washington, and more than 39 per cent. of the employees of field establishments were women; 106,673 women were employed in the Ordnance Department; 30,000 in the Signal Corps; and 25,000 in the Army Air Forces. They did convoy-driving for camps, ports, and stations in the Service Commands; they were instructors in the rudiments of flying or were employed as mechanics in the Air Forces. In the Corps of Engineers they were occupied in examining fabrics and parts for balloons; in the Signal Corps they did most of the inspection of radio parts; in the Ordnance Department, the inspection of ammunition; and in the Quartermaster Corps they evaluated textiles.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Monthly Labor Review*, June 1944, p. 1247.

<sup>2</sup> *Information Service*, 22 May 1943.

<sup>3</sup> Public Law 38, 78th Congress, 1st Session, Ch. 63, 16 Apr. 1943.

<sup>4</sup> See also p. 249.

<sup>5</sup> War Department, Bureau of Public Relations, press release, 8 Aug. 1943.

Women civilian pilots, known as W.A.S.P.s, served with the Ferrying Division of the Air Transport Command. In March 1944, there were 534 women pilots in this service, ferrying aircraft from the factories to the modification centres, to the depots and other destinations in the U.S. Some of them could fly all types of aircraft. Others were engaged in tracking and target touring. The W.A.S.P.s were not entitled to such benefits as hospitalisation and insurance benefits (in case of accident and death) because of their civilian capacity. They were expected to number 2,000 to 2,500 for flying in the United States.<sup>1</sup>

In the aviation field, women could also find positions as meteorologists, for which superior ability is required. They had opportunities as aircraft communicators and traffic controllers. New positions as instructors in ground and flying schools were rapidly opened to women. Early in 1943, nearly 150 women were listed by the Civil Aeronautics Administration as qualified to teach one or more subjects in ground schools, and 124 held the flight instructor grade. The companies were seeking to use more of them and were ready to accept women with limited qualifications, and to give them additional training and flying practice to equip them as instructors.<sup>2</sup>

Many women entered supervisory positions. Over 100 were employed, in the New England area alone, in 1943, as inspectors in war plants, to interpret and enforce Army standards for the Chemical Warfare Service.<sup>3</sup>

Women were also acting as guards in responsible positions in the policing of Army installations. In July 1943 the Ordnance Department had 1,450 women policing its establishments; the Quartermaster Corps had more than 1,200 women guards and almost 150 patrolmen. A considerable number of these women were part of the Auxiliary Military Police.<sup>4</sup>

As the need of nurses became more and more acute, a United States Cadet Nurse Corps was established under the Bolton Act provisions, to alleviate the serious shortage of nurses brought about by military and civilian war demands. The administration of the programme was delegated by law to the United States Public Health Service. The Act provided also for an Advisory Committee appointed by the Federal Security Administrator representing the nursing profession, hospitals, and accredited nurse-training

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<sup>1</sup> Statement by General Henry H. Arnold, Commanding General of the Army Air Forces, at a Hearing before the Committee on Military Affairs, 78th Congress, 2nd Session, 22 Mar. 1944.

<sup>2</sup> *Education for Victory*, 1 June 1943, p. 22.

<sup>3</sup> War Department, Bureau of Public Relations, press release, 8 Aug. 1943.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

institutions. The new programme was an expansion of the Training for Nurses (National Defense) Scholarship programme of the United States Public Health Service. Under the Act, any young woman, without having to prove need for financial assistance, was entitled to financial aid if she could meet the minimum eligibility requirements. Provision was also made in the Act for post-graduate and refresher courses for graduate nurses.<sup>1</sup> In May 1944, Dr. Thomas Parran, Surgeon-General, U.S. Public Health Service, made a special appeal for more instructors to train young women for essential civilian and military nursing services. He announced that an extensive programme of post-graduate study was available under the Bolton Act and that courses were offered in some 40 different colleges and universities, periods of study varying from five days to three months.<sup>2</sup>

*Policy regarding Women Discharged from the Armed Forces*

Women members of the armed forces are entitled to the same veterans' benefits as male members of the forces. The Servicemen's Readjustment Act<sup>3</sup>, approved on 22 June 1944, and known as the "G.I. Bill of Rights", provides federal Government aid for the readjustment in civil life of returning members of the armed forces, including hospitalisation care through the Veterans' Administration; the opportunity of resuming educational and technical training after discharge and vocational retraining; loans guaranteed up to \$2,000 by the federal Government for the purchase or construction of homes, farm or business property; assistance to veterans in finding employment; and job counselling and unemployment benefit to those unable to find employment.

To this end, every local board of the Selective Service is equipped to take up re-employment cases for servicemen and women and also to aid them in solving new job problems. Furthermore, a re-employment committee was attached to each local board and is charged with the responsibility of conferring with all servicemen and women concerning their vocational problems.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Education for Victory*, 2 Aug. 1943, p. 13; Public Law 74, 78th Congress chapter 126, 1st Session, 15 June 1943.

<sup>2</sup> Office of War Information, press release, 23 May 1944.

<sup>3</sup> Public Law 346, 78th Congress, 22 June 1944.

<sup>4</sup> *Monthly Labor Review*, Sept. 1945, p. 465.

## CHAPTER V

### POST-WAR PROSPECTS AND PLANS

Women's employment in the United States has been growing for decades, and the wartime expansion of the female labour force appears as a "sudden acceleration of an historic trend". Thus from April 1940 to April 1943 only, the ratio of working women to all women aged 14 years and over was raised from 26 per cent. to 30 per cent., a rise nearly equal to that for the entire period 1900-1940.<sup>1</sup> Their proportion, at the peak of wartime employment, reached, as already seen, 34 per cent. But the termination of the war had an immediate effect on the volume of the female labour force. General figures on employment in the United States show that from September to November 1945 women's employment dropped by 300,000, from 17,930,000 to 17,630,000; non-agricultural employment alone was reduced by 230,000, from 15,790,000 to 15,560,000. On the other hand, unemployment among women decreased during this period by 190,000, from 720,000 to 530,000.<sup>2</sup>

These figures indicate that women are leaving the labour market, but it is quite impossible to find from these facts any clue to the extent to which women will remain on the labour market.

#### EXCESS OF FEMALE LABOUR FORCE OVER "NORMAL"

An estimate of the excess manpower over what would have been expected under "normal" conditions showed that in April 1945 there were 3,660,000 women and 3,620,000 men "extra" workers. The following figures give the estimated excess woman-power over "normal" expectations, classified by age groups:

14-19 years.....	1,120,000
20-24 " .....	450,000
25-34 " .....	160,000
35-44 " .....	680,000
45-54 " .....	720,000
55-64 " .....	410,000
65 years and over.....	120,000

<sup>1</sup> John D. DURAND: "The Post-War Employment of Women in the United States; a Statistical Forecast", in *International Labour Review*, Vol. XLVIII, No. 6, Dec. 1943, pp. 698-713.

<sup>2</sup> *Monthly Labor Review*, Dec. 1945, p. 1268; Jan. 1946, p. 163.

With the exception of the 14-19 years old, most affected were newly married women and housewives and single girls with no family responsibilities. Many of these women were forced to take employment owing to the reduction of income caused by the husband's induction into the armed forces. On the other hand, the discharge of men from military service, as well as the marked increase in the marriage and birth rates, will in the post-war period cause the retirement of many women in the younger age groups. It was estimated that, if high levels of employment were assumed, it was doubtful that there will be net permanent additions to the post-war labour force from the group of extra women workers under 35 years of age. As regards the older age group, the situation is different. These women took advantage of wartime job opportunities; most of them have little family responsibility and it was estimated that few of them were forced into employment by the departure of their husbands to the armed forces. Moreover, the return to the 5-day week and to normal market conditions will help them to stay on the labour market. The number of women over 35 years of age staying in employment will therefore be influenced very largely by the level of employment in the country.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to the "extra" women workers who will remain in the labour force—this number was estimated by April 1943 at some 500,000 to 1,000,000, out of a 2,400,000 excess female labour force—it was expected that, under "normal" conditions, 2,500,000 additional women would have joined the employment market by 1950.<sup>2</sup>

#### IMMEDIATE POST-WAR SITUATION

By the autumn of 1945 certain general trends were noticeable in female employment as a result of post-war conditions.

From partial reports, it seems that a greater proportion of women were victimised by lay-offs than men. In the State of New York, for instance, it was found that in the three months that followed V-J Day, 60 per cent. of all lay-offs reported to the Employment Service were women. At the same time, women found it more difficult to get jobs. Thus most of the available jobs reported to the Employment Service in New York State were for men.<sup>3</sup> By January 1946 it was already found that men were replacing women in industries where the latter had been extensively employed during the war. In the State of New York, men were found replacing women in retail and service industries. In the course of the survey

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<sup>1</sup> *Idem*, Nov. 1945, p. 841.

<sup>2</sup> John D. DURAND, *loc. cit.*

<sup>3</sup> DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, State of New York; *Industrial Bulletin*, Dec. 1945, p. 20.

made for 1945 in 715 retail trade and service establishments in 17 up-State cities, it was found that women's employment had increased by less than 3 per cent., compared with 7 per cent. in the previous year; male employment in these establishments showed an increase of 8 per cent. over the previous year's total, when adult male employment had dropped by 7 per cent.<sup>1</sup>

Women have already been replaced in the service industries as food store clerks, waiters, hotel laundry workers and elevator operators. Retail stores, employing large numbers of women before the war, are planning to transfer women workers to other jobs, some traditionally regarded as for women only. Replacements by men, as soon as they are available, will be made in occupations such as store managers, section managers, sales clerks in men's furnishings, accountants and mail and stockroom clerks. In restaurants, men are replacing women as counter workers, dish-washers and kitchen workers.<sup>2</sup>

In manufacturing industries, it also appears that women who were substituted for men are gradually being replaced by male workers. An interesting survey made by the New York State Department of Labor makes it possible to compare the extent of the employment of women in men's jobs in December 1943 and October 1945. These data are given in the following table<sup>3</sup>:

TABLE XV. WOMEN IN MEN'S JOBS, PARTIAL SURVEY  
(December 1943-October 1945)

Proportion of women factory workers on men's jobs	December 1943		October 1945	
	No. of plants	Per cent. of plants	No. of plants	Per cent. of plants
Total.....	143	100	119	100
None.....	—	—	25	21
Less than 5 per cent.....	3	2.1	13	10.9
5 per cent. and less than 10 per cent.....	5	3.5	9	7.6
10 per cent. and less than 25 per cent.....	22	15.4	13	10.9
25 per cent. and less than 50 per cent.....	17	11.9	13	10.9
50 per cent. and less than 75 per cent.....	13	9.1	10	8.4
75 per cent. and less than 100 per cent.....	17	11.9	19	16
100 per cent.....	65	45.4	15	12.6
Not reported.....	1	0.7	2	1.7

<sup>1</sup> *Idem*, Jan. 1946, p. 40.

<sup>2</sup> *Idem*, Dec. 1945, p. 21.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*



Twenty-four plants visited in 1943 had suspended operation, some temporarily, by October 1945. Consequently, total employment in the 143 plants decreased by 58 per cent., which is a high figure compared to the rate of the decrease which prevailed in the State. (This is due to the fact that a high proportion of heavy industry plants were included in the survey.) The decrease in women's employment was sharper than in men's: 69 per cent., as compared with 51 per cent.

As the table given above shows, a certain proportion of women continued to hold jobs considered "men's" jobs. Whereas at the height of war production every woman employed in nearly half the plants was doing "men's" work, the proportion of these was considerably lower (12.6 per cent.) in October 1945. According to the survey, women are now replaced at jobs requiring heavy lifting, and at jobs which had to be simplified to enable women to perform them. Welding, punch and drill-press operating jobs, traditionally considered as "men's" jobs, which women took over during the war, are being returned to men. Women are also being replaced at jobs which before the war were considered detrimental to their health, such as core-making and grinding. It is also fairly generally reported that men are now replacing women on night shifts. In the iron and steel industry, the same reasons, together with the fact that veterans are returning to their jobs and that women, lacking seniority, are retiring after lay-offs, are mentioned as causing the replacement of women workers by men. In the ordnance and accessories industry, another factor is mentioned as causing replacement of women by men: there, the degree of seniority is of prime importance and leads to some extent to replacement of women by men.

On the other hand, in only 3 of the 143 manufacturing plants visited, will all women actually lose their jobs. In 9 plants they will be transferred to similar jobs requiring the same degree of skill; in 15 plants those who are replaced by men will be transferred to other jobs. But many of these jobs are of the type known before the war as "women's" jobs, and the rates of pay will be lower than those received on war jobs. In the optical and precision instruments industry there is no replacement of women by men, because of women's greater dexterity; in some plants, women exclusively do dial painting and radium painting.

The situation in the State of New York indicates trends comparable to those prevailing in California, although the reduction in the female labour force seems to be of greater magnitude in California. Reflecting cut-backs in aircraft and shipbuilding, and the usual seasonal decline of employment in canneries, the

female factory force in manufacturing industries decreased to 116,000 in October 1945; this figure compares with 232,300 in October 1944 and 260,000 in October 1943. In the durable-goods manufacturing industries alone the number of production workers fell to 37,000 in October 1945, as against 144,700 in October 1944 and 179,400 in October 1943. This downward trend was however halted in December 1945, when the number of women workers in these industries was 30,600, as against 30,500 in November. The aircraft industry alone employed 10,600 women in December 1945, as compared with 103,500 female workers in March 1943, when women's employment in aircraft factories reached its peak. In the non-durable goods manufacturing industries the level of employment appears much more stable. It was 79,100 in October 1945, 87,600 in October 1944, and 80,600 in October 1943. But in these industries the average female factory force decreased between 1944 and 1945 in contrast to a slight increase in male employment. The proportion of female workers in this State also decreased in the autumn of 1945. The ratio of women workers to the total manufacturing factory force dropped to 24.8 per cent. in October 1945 from 26.0 per cent. in the previous month, and 29.2 per cent. in October 1944.

It should be borne in mind however that, in 1941, there was an average of 66,400 women factory workers in California, including 57,400 in non-durable goods industries and 9,000 in the durable-goods industries. The ratio of women workers in these three groups respectively was 14.9 per cent., 33.7 per cent. and 3.3 per cent. Thus the average of 88,900 women in 1945 was still almost 10 times the average of 9,000 women production workers in durable-goods manufacturing industries.<sup>1</sup>

The situation of women in the employment market appears to be a complex one. On the one hand there exists an increased female labour force which, in spite of the retirement of a number of women, is expected to be much higher than before the war. On the other hand, there are apparent reconversion problems which seem to be heavier for women. They are dismissed in greater proportions from war industries or services where their employment increased greatly during the war, and they find it more difficult to find work for a number of reasons, including (apart from the fact that the veterans are now getting back to civilian employment and thus create a labour problem) matters specifically related to women's conditions of work, such as restrictions on night work,

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<sup>1</sup> DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS, Division of Labor Statistics and Research, State of California: *Employment of Women in California* (monthly reports, Oct., Dec. 1945).

weight lifting, etc., which affect particularly a number of manufacturing industries and heavy industries; women's lower seniority status in industry, with the consequence that women are laid off first and rehired last; and the division into men's and women's work, with the tendency to restrict women's employment more and more to the latter category.

#### ATTITUDE OF EMPLOYERS TO FEMALE EMPLOYMENT

While it is clear that the employment of women after the war will depend to a very large extent on such factors as the nature of the reconversion plan and the level of production after the end of the war, it will also be affected by the planning and attitude of employers as regards their female employees.

A number of companies which worked on plans for production and marketing for the post-war period have given indications as to the possibilities of full employment, including women. According to a survey made by the Women's Bureau, of more than 300 war production plants which were visited early in 1944, more than one fifth showed a definitely favourable outlook as to the post-war employment of women. Of 25 aircraft plants reporting on this subject, 15 had a favourable outlook as to the employment of women after the war, expecting to continue production; others, however, pointed out women's lack of seniority and some said that they expected to give jobs to returning men, and probably would not use women. Twenty machine-tool and other metal plants and 6 manufacturers of engines and motors predicted good employment for women; a number of employers declared that women had proved their worth and would be kept.

Another survey carried out in June and July 1944 by the New York State Department of Labor showed significant trends in employers' post-war planning with regard to women workers. The 304 firms which were visited were representative of firms engaged in war work; they were employing 232,000 workers, of whom 75,000 were women factory workers. A considerable number of plants (54) had made no post-war plans at the time of investigators' visits; 91 employers definitely anticipated a drastic cut in women's employment after the war; 126 executives felt that no significant drop in women's employment would occur; and only 33 companies planned to increase their employment of both men and women workers with the return to peacetime employment.

The 91 plants which anticipated a substantial decrease in women's post-war employment, were, in the main, plants where

the work is considered too heavy and dirty for women, although women performed the work during the war. They employed 40 per cent. of the 75,000 women included in the survey.

Of the group of 33 companies which were looking forward to retaining or even increasing their staff, both of men and women, 14 were in the consumer industries, such as food, textiles, apparel, paper and printing and pharmaceutical products; and 11 plants were in the electrical equipment or scientific instruments and apparatus manufacturing industry and were engaged solely in war production, but expected to retain or increase employment to satisfy the demands of the civilian market after the war.

The majority of the 126 plants, which reported that they did not expect any significant drop in women's employment, were in industries which have always had a high proportion of women, such as apparel, textiles, paper, chemicals, leather products, electrical equipment and scientific and photographic equipment. In the other establishments of this group, the proportion of women in the total labour force was the same as in the pre-war period, or women were employed on the same operations, such as inspection and assembly.<sup>1</sup>

In a specific industry—cane-sugar refineries—where women's employment rose sharply during the war (from 8 per cent. of the industrial workers in October 1941, to 24 per cent. by the end of 1943), and where women were to a large extent engaged in types of work from which they were generally excluded before the war, all employers planned to use women workers on work that they performed before the war, but none had definite plans for using them on jobs customarily filled by men.<sup>2</sup>

#### WOMEN WORKERS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS POST-WAR EMPLOYMENT

The decision of women workers whether they would go out of the labour market or continue to work after the war is a matter which cannot, at the present time, be foreseen with accuracy, because voluntary retirement of women from the labour market will be largely influenced by whether or not action is taken to maintain employment and to ensure that sufficient employment is available in the future. If wide-spread unemployment is anticipated, many of the women who plan ultimately to withdraw

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<sup>1</sup> NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, Division of Women, Child Labor and Minimum Wage: *Employers' Post-War Plans for Women Workers* (6 pp., Jan. 1945).

<sup>2</sup> WOMEN'S BUREAU: *Women's Wartime Jobs in Cane-Sugar Refineries* (Bulletin No. 192-9, Washington, D.C., 1945).

from the labour market will be likely to try to safeguard the family income by holding their position as long as possible.<sup>1</sup>

The Women's Bureau has had in progress a field investigation into women's expectations in the post-war period, including the extent to which they constituted part of the pre-war labour force, and such important factors as their family situation and the extent to which they are responsible for contributing to the support of others.<sup>2</sup> While this comprehensive survey has not yet been published, the results of several partial enquiries made in war production areas have been made public, and give valuable information on the various aspects of the problem. They all indicate that a large majority of women—about 80 to 85 per cent.—want to remain in employment. Of these women, a very large proportion will have to continue working in order to support themselves or dependants, or have to supplement the family income. Marital status in this respect is less influential than may have been expected. Another fact appears clearly, namely, that women who have become acquainted with factory conditions of work and occupations are reluctant to go back to the low-paying industries which are manned essentially by a female labour force.

In the Detroit area representatives of the Women's Bureau found, in 1944, that 75 per cent. of women workers planned to continue working after the end of the war. More than four fifths of the former school girls, and three fifths of the housewives, who entered the labour force during the war, expected to work; more than half of the in-migrant women workers intended to leave the area and work elsewhere. As regards their financial responsibilities, the survey showed that four fifths of the employed women contributed all or part of their earnings to the family household or to others. Of the women living with their families, 93 per cent. contributed regularly to the support of the family or others; one third of these women regularly contributed their entire earnings to the family. Thirty-two per cent. of the women living away from the family household contributed regularly to others, in addition to supporting themselves.<sup>3</sup>

While the great majority (two thirds) of employed women in this area were in clerical, sales and service occupations in 1940, the number of women who gained experience in engineering operations increased greatly during the war. It was suggested that their skills could be transferred to other industries after

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. "State Variations in War Migration and Post-War Demobilisation", in *Monthly Labor Review*, Sept. 1944, pp. 481-495.

<sup>2</sup> *Labor Information Bulletin*, June 1944, p. 6.

<sup>3</sup> Women's Bureau, press release, 17 June 1945.

the war, if the area develops new industries rather than returns to its pre-war one-industry status.<sup>1</sup>

A comparable survey was made in 1944 in Erie County (New York). Of the total number of employed women, mostly in Buffalo, 80 per cent. expected to continue to work after the war, that is to say, about 50 per cent. more women planned to remain in the labour force than were employed in this area in 1940. Nine tenths of the former school girls and half of the housewives wished to continue working. Of the women expecting to continue to work, nine tenths of the single, the married, the widowed and the divorced made regular contributions each week to the family household; two thirds of these women gave 50 per cent. or more of their net earnings.<sup>2</sup>

A report of the Research Department of the United Automobile Workers' Union (C.I.O.) indicated that over 85 per cent. of the women members of the union were planning to continue working outside of their homes after the war, according to a sample survey made by the Department in various parts of the country. Practically all the single women and widows, and 68.7 per cent. of the married women expressed this decision in reply to the questionnaire which was distributed. Of these women, 26 per cent. had been working in factories in 1942, and 74 per cent. had been housewives, students in schools or in occupations other than factory work at that time. When asked about the kind of occupations they would prefer after the war, about 50 per cent. of the women, who had never been employed in a factory before the war, said that they wished to continue in shop work. Approximately 25 per cent. of them replied that they preferred to return to their former peacetime civilian jobs or to work outside the factory. Almost 10 per cent. said that "any type of work" would be satisfactory, provided that they could work. The remainder had decided to give up their jobs at the end of the war.<sup>3</sup>

Another sample enquiry was made in New York State in the autumn and winter of 1944-45. It was found that more than four fifths of the women employed in the war industries of the State planned to continue working in the post-war period. Of the workers interviewed who plan to keep on working, 93 per cent. stated that they must work to support themselves or members of their families. Before the war, however, 39 per cent. of this sample group were housewives and students. Some difference was noticeable among women in relation to their marital status,

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Monthly Labor Review*, May 1944, p. 1030.

although the proportion of women who want to continue to work was, in all groups, quite high. Thus, of the workers interviewed, 88 per cent. of the single women, 97 per cent. of the widows and divorced women, and about 70 per cent. of the married women expected to continue working.

A remarkable proportion of women workers—five out of six who expected to continue working—hoped to remain in their present job or do the same kind of work elsewhere. The desire to remain in production work springs from the realisation that women have acquired the basic skills and have the aptitudes to do the work. In addition they earned in factories comparatively good wages, and conditions of work (shorter hours and more satisfactory general conditions of work) were more attractive, generally, than those prevailing in industries where women had generally been employed before the war (retail trade, domestic service, and service industries). Thus 93.9 per cent. of the former domestic workers wanted to remain in their war jobs.<sup>1</sup>

#### POST-WAR EMPLOYMENT PROSPECTS

Various employers have expressed their willingness to retain women workers in their plants, considering the skill and ability they have shown during the war. The Women's Bureau, however, after a detailed study of the question, concluded that the need for women workers after the war would continue mainly along the following lines:

In producing consumer goods, where women have long been employed, as in the electrical, shoe, textile, food, jewelry and other industries.

In service industries, where shortages will continue acute, as in restaurants, laundries, households and various selling trades.

In community services, as in health, welfare, social security, child care and recreation, both in America and in reconstruction elsewhere.

In specialised technical and professional work, as in medicine, nutrition, education, rehabilitation of handicapped, research and various scientific services.

In the manufacture of goods to help in the reconstruction of devastated countries, as well as the replenishment of depleted stocks of the U.S.A.

In various business and clerical operations, as in secretarial work, statistics and accounting.<sup>2</sup>

From a study published by the Women's Bureau, certain facts emerge from the wide-spread employment of women in

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<sup>1</sup> DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, Division of Industrial Relations, Women in Industry and Minimum Wage, State of New York: *Post-War Plans of Women Workers in New York State* (Aug. 1945).

<sup>2</sup> *Labor Information Bulletin*, June 1944, p. 4; WOMEN'S BUREAU: *A Preview as to Women Workers in the Transition from War to Peace* (Special Bulletin No. 18, 1944).

factories, which make it possible to indicate already some operations in which women's work might be best used, and efficient, in industry. In certain types of work, women workers were employed before the war, but their number in such occupations greatly extended during the war years and women showed particular aptitudes for such work as assembly of small articles, requiring deftness, accuracy and patience; inspecting of many types, requiring conscientious care and attention to details and sometimes involving expert procedures; operation of various machines, requiring close following of instructions and care in performing processes correctly and in preventing spoilage of materials; tool-crib and stockroom work; burring and filing; core-making; and wrapping and packing. Thus, during the war, large numbers of women have had training in operations that are similar or very comparable to those that will be needed in production for civilians. Among the goods for which there will be great demands and for the production of which female labour might be used are, in particular, electrical equipment for lighting, radios, medical care and various home uses; household utensils; hardware and other small metal parts, and interchangeable small parts for automobiles and aircraft; and scientific measuring instruments and certain plastic products.<sup>1</sup>

Among the conclusions reached during the war as to women's employment, one is the ability of women to adapt themselves and perform successfully jobs which they had not been used to do, especially in industry. As has been seen, a preference for women workers has already been shown during the reconversion period in the optical and precision-instrument industry.

The urgent demands for labour led in particular to the acceleration of the dilution of work processes, so that more semi-skilled or unskilled labour could be used, and women were engaged after a short period of intensive training in work quite new to them, which they have performed satisfactorily. The effects of the large-scale adaptation of machinery and arrangements of work for employment of women workers during the war should not be overlooked. It seems likely that, generally speaking, the shift to peacetime production should be greatly facilitated by continuing to employ women on the jobs and at machines designed for them. Many firms installed new devices that enabled women to do jobs which otherwise would have been too heavy, such as the installation of cranes, hoists and other lifting devices or the use of lighter jigs, dies, fixtures and holding devices that facilitate

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<sup>1</sup> Elisabeth D. BENHAM: *Employment Opportunities in Characteristic Industrial Occupations of Women* (Women's Bureau, Oct. 1944).



women's work. In some cases, rotation with other jobs was arranged where continuous work at one process would be too tiring for women; in others, fewer duties were grouped into individual jobs to fit them for performance for women; and, in some industries, women did the lighter jobs, while men were engaged on the heavier processes that women were not able to perform.<sup>1</sup>

The need has been felt for detailed studies which would give indications as regards the demands and the supply of women in particular fields of employment in the post-war period, as well as offer to women who wish to take up employment or remain in industry information on their prospects in the various industries.

The Women's Bureau has already published a series of monographs on post-war opportunities for women's employment in the field of medical services.<sup>2</sup> These pamphlets are designed primarily to serve as a guide to women who would wish to train for employment.

The prospects of women's post-war employment in a woman-employing industry were reviewed in a study<sup>3</sup> of the hosiery industry made by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (U.S. Department of Labor). The labour force employed in this industry consists mainly of women (61 per cent. of the labour force in October 1939, 63 per cent. in October 1942). It seems very likely that in cases where the position of women did not change during the war in this industry, they will continue in peacetime to be employed in the same operations. The distribution of women's employment has considerably changed in some occupations. The question now is whether these gains represent a temporary development, or whether they will be maintained in peacetime conditions. In full-fashioned hosiery manufacture, which demands a relatively high degree of operating skill, some gains have been made in the employment of women in such skilled occupations as knitting and topping, but, even where the use of women knitters has proved satisfactory, mill owners generally continue to indicate a preference for men in these occupations, and it seems probable that, once ample labour supplies are available, mills will revert to the use of men. The employment of women as boarders, on the contrary, is virtually assured; already before the war, women were

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<sup>1</sup> *A Preview as to Women Workers in the Transition from War to Peace, op. cit.*

<sup>2</sup> WOMEN'S BUREAU: *The Outlook of Women in Occupations in the Medical Service*: No. 1. Physical Therapists; No. 2. Occupational Therapists; No. 3. Professional Nurses; No. 4. Medical Laboratory Technicians; No. 5. Practical Nurses and Hospital Attendants; No. 6. Medical Record Librarians; No. 7. Women Physicians; No. 8. X-Ray Technicians; No. 9. Women Dentists; No. 10. Dental Hygienists, etc. (Bulletin No. 203, Washington, D.C., 1945).

<sup>3</sup> *Monthly Labor Review*, May 1945, pp. 978-989.

increasingly engaged as boarders. In general, it is not probable that women will replace men in highly technical jobs like machine-fixing, nor for work in the dye house, where conditions are unpleasant. In seamless hosiery manufacture, there seems to be a higher probability that wartime gains will persist after the war. Technological developments in both branches of the industry, not fully effective before the war, will, according to the conclusions of the study, favour the continued trend towards greater use of women in some occupations, but may eliminate some jobs in which women have been customarily employed.

#### RECONVERSION AND POST-WAR POLICIES REGARDING WOMEN WORKERS

As war industries cut-backs increased, the need arose for the establishment of protective policies as regards the discharge of women workers. Problems related to women's employment in the reconversion period have been dealt with by two federal agencies—the Women's Advisory Committee of the War Manpower Commission, and the Women's Bureau—which have put forward programmes designed to facilitate the solution of those problems. It should be borne in mind, however, that neither of these agencies at present exercises administrative authority.

The Women's Advisory Committee of the War Manpower Commission issued in February 1944 a series of recommendations designed to assure to women a fair treatment during the reconversion of war industries. These recommendations were submitted again on 21 March 1945 to the Chairman of the Manpower Commission, with the request that every effort be made to implement them into policy. The Committee's recommendations cover a great range of questions. The principles which were recommended concerning the separation of women from wartime jobs included:

(a) That plans be made for counselling workers to be dismissed as to the following:

- (i) Possibilities and procedures for transfers to other jobs in the locality;
- (ii) Retraining programmes in operation in the locality;
- (iii) Social security rights (unemployment insurance, old-age insurance) and any other Government provisions;

(b) That notice of cessation of work be given as far in advance as possible;

(c) That split-shift workers, including children for whom part-time working arrangements have been made, be laid off first;

(d) That voluntary resignations be called for from those women workers who wish to return to civilian life as soon as possible;

(e) That separations of other women workers be based on the following considerations:

- (i) Skill necessary on the job;
- (ii) Seniority on the job;
- (iii) Dismissal pay based on the length of service.<sup>1</sup>

On the other hand, recommendations on women's post-war employment were approved on 5 December 1944 at a conference, held under the auspices of the Women's Bureau, where 30 national organisations, including trade unions and women's associations, as well as interested federal Government services and private firms, were represented.

The conference pointed out that a great proportion of women enter employment because they have to support themselves and their dependants, in many cases as the prime family wage earner, or to supplement the family income in order to achieve a decent standard of living for themselves and their children. A successful solution of women's employment problems in the reconversion and post-war period would obviously be facilitated by the realisation of full employment, towards which "it is basic to work", the conference emphasised. Women's prospects should be dealt with in relation to all post-war planning, and their employment problems could be eased by the following methods:

(a) Studies on the kinds and number of women's war jobs which may come to an end, on the possibility of transferring war skills and on new applications for those skills in civilian industry and employment;

(b) Establishment of policies and procedures for necessary lay-offs to prevent discrimination against women as such;

(c) Utilisation and proper equipment of public employment service facilities (re-establishment of State and local advisory committees to the public employment services was recommended);

(d) Opening to women of the benefits of adequate counselling, training, and retraining facilities;

(e) Establishment of at least adequate minimum conditions in the traditional women-employing industries to facilitate the return of women to pre-war occupations;

(f) Wider use by women workers of the advantages of collective bargaining;

(g) Provision of funds to enable women workers to return to former homes or to areas where employment opportunities are available;

(h) Advance planning of public works programmes to meet the needs of all workers affected by reconversion shifts;

(i) Utilisation of the services of qualified women on post-war planning agencies, such as municipal and State planning committees.

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<sup>1</sup> WAR MANPOWER COMMISSION, Women's Advisory Committee: *Women in the Post-War* (15 pp., Washington, D.C., Apr. 1945).

Legislation presents an opportunity for establishing good labour standards. It is therefore recommended that attention be given particularly to the restoration and full enforcement of pre-war State and federal laws; to the improvement of legal labour standards; to the extension to all States of minimum wage, maximum hour and equal pay legislation and protection of collective bargaining rights; to the administrative extension of minimum wage orders to uncovered occupations; to the extension and improvement in workmen's compensation, old-age, survivors' and unemployment insurance, in order to provide adequate benefits to all workers; and to the removal of all unfair and restrictive provisions in law and in administration regarding unemployment insurance. The administration of labour laws by State Departments of Labor should be carried out effectively with adequate funds and staff and progressive policies. Additional legislation could also be provided in order to solve problems and raise standards in major women-employing industries such as consumer and service industries, and to develop good employment policies for various types, skills, and status of women.<sup>1</sup>

In order that collective bargaining may be utilised to the utmost to safeguard women workers' interests, the Women's Bureau called in February 1944 a conference of women representatives from organised groups which have a significant female membership, belonging both to the American Federation of Labor and to the Congress of Industrial Organizations. The conference agreed on a series of principles which should be included in collective agreements and govern women's conditions of work. These standards are of importance, not only because they reflect the position of the Women's Bureau on these questions, but also because they are likely to serve as a basis for trade union action in the post-war period.

The proposed contract provisions which deal with the questions of wages, seniority, rest periods and lunch periods are given below:

*General.*—It is mutually agreed between the company and the union that no discrimination based on sex or marital status shall be practised or permitted.

*Wages.*—Wage rates established under this contract shall be set by the job, not by the sex of the worker. Wage rates and job classifications shall be based on job content.

Jobs or departments shall not be designated by sex, as "male" or "female" jobs or "men's" or "women's" departments, or by any other wording with a similar meaning and effect. All previously existing sex classifications shall be eliminated.

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<sup>1</sup> Information communicated by the Women's Bureau.

The starting rate shall be the same for all inexperienced workers, irrespective of sex. The automatic progression schedule applicable during the training period likewise shall be the same for all workers.

*Seniority.*—Women shall accumulate seniority in the same manner as male employees, and shall have the same rights of promotion or transfer to other departments. If it becomes necessary to eliminate or curtail the work of any department in which women are employed, they shall be entitled to carry their seniority to other departments. No new employees shall be hired as long as women currently employed are available for upgrading in the same department or for assignment to jobs in other departments.

*Rest periods.*—In addition to a regularly scheduled lunch period, each employee covered by this agreement shall be given two 10-minute rest periods in each work day. During such periods the employee shall be free to leave his workplace. Such rest periods shall be paid for at the employee's regular rate and shall not result in lengthening his over-all workday.

*Lunch periods.*—Every employee shall be given a regularly designated lunch period which shall occur not more than 5 hours from the beginning of the employee's work day. Such lunch period shall be at least 30 minutes. A 30-minute lunch period shall be paid for. During his lunch period no employee shall be required to remain at his workplace or to perform any duties connected with his employment.<sup>1</sup>

Standards regarding maternity leave are given elsewhere in this study, in connection with the problem of maternity protection in industry.<sup>2</sup>

These principles, as was indicated in foregoing chapters, are implemented, at least partially, in a number of cases. In fact, a detailed equal pay for equal work policy was evolved during the war and took into account the particular circumstances of the economic situation in the country. The National War Labor Board, however, was a wartime agency, and its policy no doubt will have to be adjusted to peacetime conditions. The National Wage Stabilization Board which replaced the war agency has not yet dealt with the subject. The principle of equal pay has been widely admitted in the country, particularly by large industrial companies during the war. To take only one example: during the hearings on the Equal Pay Bill before the Senate Committee, time was set aside for opposition testimony, but no one asked to be heard.

As regards employment problems in the reconversion period, the recommendations of the Women's Bureau and the Women's Advisory Committee dealing with State and federal responsibilities towards the best methods to be used in connection with the redistribution of womanpower are of an essentially advisory character.

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<sup>1</sup> WOMEN'S BUREAU: *Suggested Standards for Union Contract Provisions Affecting Women* (4 pp., Mar. 1944).

<sup>2</sup> See p. 231.

Great emphasis is therefore placed on legislative action and development of collective bargaining. Action has been taken in some States regarding the implementation of the equal pay for equal work principle, and endeavours to raise standards in the major woman-employing industries have been actively continued in some States, such as New York, by the establishment of statutory minimum wage rates. The protection of women workers in industries where the labour force is predominantly female would certainly prevent the victimisation of female workers who will be redundant workers in industry and will tend to enter other fields of employment. But from surveys of women's plans for the post-war period, it appears that work in industry will appeal to women to a greater extent than before the war, not only on account of the relatively better conditions of work that women experienced in such occupations during the war—this argument could be met by improving conditions of work in the other industries—but also on account of the skills women have acquired and the aptitudes they have discovered in themselves during the war. The discontinuation of the war training programmes raises an important point: there are now substantially fewer facilities for women to enable them to adapt their skills to peacetime production work.

Here again the major question has to be faced, namely, the problem of the full utilisation of the entire productive capacity of the country, which would create demands for an expanded labour force, and make it possible to absorb in peacetime the excess female labour force, particularly in industry. In present circumstances, the problem of full employment is of cardinal importance. The solution of this problem would make it possible to retain in the labour force the women who really need, or want to remain in, employment, and to utilise their capabilities according to their wishes.

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## General Conclusions

The International Labour Conference at its 26th Session (Philadelphia, 1944) adopted a series of principles governing the employment of women (Recommendation concerning employment organisation in the transition from war to peace) which may serve as a basis for evaluating the experience of women in wartime employment in the two great belligerent countries whose activities in this regard have been under review. Within a series of general principles concerning employment, the Recommendation states:

The redistribution of women workers in each national economy should be carried out on the principle of complete equality of opportunity for men and women in respect of admission to employment on the basis of their individual merit, skill and experience, and steps should be taken to encourage the establishment of wage rates on the basis of job content, without regard to sex.<sup>1</sup>

The Recommendation proceeds to call for redistribution of women workers without prejudice to the provisions of existing international labour Conventions and Recommendations concerning the employment of women.<sup>2</sup> It supports the principle of equal rates of wages for men and women based upon job content, which should result from investigations conducted in co-operation with employers' and workers' organisations and leading to objective standards for establishing wage rates. It proposes the raising of the relative status of the industries and occupations which traditionally have employed a large proportion of women, by improvement in the conditions of work and methods of placement therein.<sup>3</sup>

Moreover, throughout the Recommendation the principles proposed refer to women as well as to men. They provide for collecting information related to planning for the labour market during the conversion to obtain full employment; they call for organisation of placement services to meet the special needs of workers in an adjusting labour market. Particularly they propose

<sup>1</sup> Recommendation (No. 71) concerning employment organisation in the transition from war to peace; (I.L.O.: *Official Bulletin*, Vol. XXVI, No. 1, 1 June 1944, p. 63).

<sup>2</sup> The Conventions which are referred to especially are No. 3, concerning maternity protection (1919); No. 4, concerning the employment of women during the night (1919), revised by No. 41 (1934); No. 13, concerning the use of white lead in painting (1921); and No. 45, concerning the employment of women in underground work in mines (1935).

<sup>3</sup> *Official Bulletin*, loc. cit., p. 72.

programmes for providing training, retraining, and guidance for displaced industrial workers and for youth. All of these Recommendations have an important bearing upon the employment of women in the early years of peacetime economy.<sup>1</sup>

In the light of these principles the experience of the United Kingdom and the United States in wartime employment of women and the outlook for women's economic status in post-war years are extremely illuminating as to the problems of women's economic status among democratic peoples at this time. In varying degrees and with definable differences the experience of these two countries would be found to be repeated in such countries as Canada or Australia. In invaded and occupied countries, the record, if there had been one, might have proved to be very different. Among all the peoples who were fighting to preserve democratic rights, the necessity for women to contribute their skill and capacity beyond and in addition to their biological and home-making functions was marked during war years. While it is early to gauge the influence of war experience upon post-war conditions of life and behaviour, it is not early to begin gathering together such data as are available, with a view to their comparison. Moreover, the emergency of the previously invaded countries in post-war years may be of such character as to require the services of all available persons for reconstruction, just as the needs of war pressed upon the belligerents.

#### SIMILARITIES IN WOMEN'S WARTIME EMPLOYMENT IN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND THE UNITED STATES

The experience of the two countries as to the number of women entering the labour force during the war years is plainly comparable. While the percentage of women in the United Kingdom in relation to the total labour force exceeded that of the United States—39.4 per cent. in the United Kingdom in June 1944 as compared with 34 per cent. in the United States in December 1944—the increase of the war years in the two countries was similar. It amounted to a raising of the total number of employed women by 2,428,000 (1,760,000 in industry, agriculture, commerce and the public service) between June 1939 and June 1944 in the United Kingdom. In the United States, the comparable wartime recruitments, which in this instance occurred between March 1940 and July 1944, amounted to 5,710,000 in non-agricultural pursuits, with another 400,000 added to agricultural employment between June 1940 and June 1944. Since the proportion of the female to

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 63 and 68-70.



the total labour force had reached 32.9 per cent. among the British workers in 1939, and 26 per cent. among the United States workers in 1940, the relative increases appearing in the two countries are comparable, even though the utilisation of womanpower in the United States remained considerably less than that of the United Kingdom. In the latter country, the record shows that the employment of women reached almost the saturation point in a society which obviously had still to rely upon its women to care for their families and children's welfare, and to provide for a large part of their daily physical and psychological needs. The necessities of war pressed less intensively upon the labour market in the United States than upon that of the United Kingdom, but the pressure was such, nevertheless, as to induce the women of the United States to enter employment in vastly greater numbers than ever before. In both countries the increases were greater than in the First World War and greater than during the preceding decades. The latter fact is interesting, especially when it is noted that a rising trend was apparent in the United States throughout the present century, although the proportions had not reached the relatively stable levels that had obtained within the United Kingdom for some years.

The experience of the two countries was comparable also as regards the type of work which utilised women for the first time, although there were significant differences as well. Women entered the semi-skilled and skilled occupations, the traditionally better-paid jobs, in considerable numbers. Conversely, they moved out of the lower-standard, lower-paid occupations where women traditionally have been employed. The inevitable increase in production of durable goods, as contrasted with non-durable and consumers' goods, called for new recruits in the labour market. The Government controls over consumer output and national policies resulting from total war in both countries encouraged or directed the exodus of women from the latter industries and occupations.

The result was a new structure for the labour markets of both countries, at least temporarily. It brought about a potential realignment in the relation between men's and women's work and the use of women's capacities which may have considerable influence upon the future economy of both countries. The First World War had great technological influence, especially in the war industries, upon the organisation of jobs and processes; it introduced a vast array of repetitive tasks resulting from job breakdowns that, especially in the United States, never again entirely left the scene. The recent war not only continued that

process, but, in addition and at the same time, it upgraded women into work that required more technical training and a higher degree of skill than had been the case heretofore.

The experiment which was made in response to the pressing needs of a tight labour market in both countries demonstrated the suitability of women, especially for certain types of work. It has shown in some instances the superiority of women to men, in work calling for precision and requiring a high degree of accuracy and care. It has proved the dexterity of women in fine but often rapid moving handwork. In certain aspects of instrument-making, in the electrical industries, even in some parts of the machine-tool industries, management has indicated a high degree of satisfaction with the performance of women which it may not be ready to forgo in the future.

At the same time, the experience of both countries with the relatively greater amount of absenteeism among women as compared with men and with their relatively greater turnover in the early years of their employment, especially in occupations heavier and more hazardous than they had been accustomed to enter, has also shown the need of recognising certain characteristics of women's potential labour power. Explanation for both phenomena can be found in the two countries. Pressures outside the work, especially those resulting from home responsibilities and duties, bore more heavily upon women workers than upon men. Inexperience and inadequate training played a part in creating discontent or fatigue leading to separations and absence among women, particularly in certain of the heavy war industries.

In the early years of the war, also, and in the heavier types of work to which women were unaccustomed, accident rates increased among women more than among men. Inexperience and lack of training took a toll among both men and women in accidents resulting from carelessness or ignorance, improperly used safeguards, and unsuitable clothing. Safety education, appropriate clothing and a stricter use of safety provisions brought very definite results in the declining proportion of the mounting accidents to British women in the later months of the war, however, proving, as has been done repeatedly in relation to inexperienced youth, the necessity for adequate safety education as well as for safety provisions to reduce or eliminate hazards.

Experience in the United Kingdom, particularly, demonstrated once more limits of safety for women in heavy work. With aids in the way of mechanical devices, British women performed a large number of heavy tasks which before the war had always been assigned to men. The exigencies of war governed the situation

requiring the use of women upon work that never before would have been selected in the United Kingdom as appropriate to their physiological structure. Industry in the United States, with the continued advice of the Women's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor, profited by British experience, and, being less pressed, avoided for women much of the heavy work that women carried on in the United Kingdom. Again, the difference in the needs of the labour market controlled the difference in experience within the countries. The ultimate result for both, nevertheless, has been a clearer definition than before the war of the safety limits in the assignment of women to heavy tasks and the conditions of work which reduce their hazards. In some types of work and some occupations experience in the United States revealed less proneness to accident among women than among men.

It was made clear in both countries, moreover, that a careful and appropriate use of welfare programmes, properly selected and developed, paid dividends in reducing irregularities among women workers and increasing their productive power. Here, also, experience in the United Kingdom was more significant and conclusive than that in the United States. A far larger range of services was developed in the former than in the latter country, including a considerable array of services to the woman as homemaker as well as wage earner. Day-care for children, home-helps, canteens and prepared meals for inside or outside consumption played a large part in assisting the woman worker in the United Kingdom to carry her double responsibilities. Experiments along these lines were far less extensive and universal in the United States than in the United Kingdom. The latter country likewise developed a relatively wider and more expert use of the industrial counsellor. Differences between the two countries in this regard demonstrate the role of necessity in industrial motivation. The experience of both countries, nevertheless, pointed in the same direction. Effective welfare programmes and social services helped to lighten strains and improve performance, especially among women. Appropriate, skilled and objective services were shown to be essential to good results, however. Identification with worker needs and avoidance of any real or apparent ulterior purposes of management were necessary if the services were to gain the confidence of workers.

War experience in both countries, finally, exercised a comparable influence upon the wage structure as it related to men's and women's wage status. Earnings rose with increased and overtime hours of

work, with upgrading of workers from less skilled to more skilled or higher-paid operations, with a progressive elimination of substandard rates where the pinch of the labour market dictated, and with provision for increases to meet some part of the rise in the cost of living. In both countries, principles of equal payment for equal work without consideration of sex were reiterated repeatedly. During the war they received a larger measure of official recognition in the United States than in the United Kingdom. In both countries, as a result of all factors in the situation, women's earnings rose relatively more than men's; hourly rates showed more influence than weekly earnings, since greater overtime was worked by men in both countries. Taken as a whole, however, the difference between the wages of the sexes in both countries changed less than might well have been expected. Women's wages in the closing months of the war in the United States were averaging 60 to 65 per cent. of men's wages; before the war they had exhibited more nearly a 50 per cent. variation. In the United Kingdom, in the war industries, women's weekly earnings in 1944 were increased on the average close to 100 per cent. more or less, over those of 1940; men's earnings in the same period and at the same employments had risen from 55 to 85 per cent. Wide difference in averages seemed still to obtain, nevertheless.

Some relation seems apparent between the relative increase in wages and the rise of women's participation in trade unions. Comparable characteristics between the countries are discernible here, also, although women in the United Kingdom made much greater advances than women in the United States. Both quantitatively and qualitatively, British women moved into trade union activity on a considerable scale; approximately 900,000 women entered the trade unions between 1939 and 1943, bringing the proportion of women in trade unions to over 23 per cent. of total membership in 1943. Statistics on the total women's membership in trade unions in the United States are not obtainable, but they would seem to have constituted no more perhaps than 15 per cent. of the total membership in 1944, a figure which also represented an increase of women members as compared with pre-war years. Women in both countries took positions of greater responsibility than before the war, but while comparable data are not available, expansion in this regard would appear to have been relatively greater in the United Kingdom than in the United States, even though before the war British women were more experienced in trade unionism and exercised greater influence.

DIFFERENCES IN WAR EXPERIENCE IN EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN  
IN THE TWO COUNTRIES

Foremost among the differences in the war experience of the two countries as regards the employment of women was their greater use in all branches of war service in the United Kingdom than in the United States. While the proportionate increases in total employment of women were comparable, the actual use of British women in vital services of all sorts was greater and it absorbed a larger part of the potential womanpower of the nation. In the armed services women in the United Kingdom were given a larger share in the vital defence of the country, manning aircraft guns, transport planes and bomber ferries, and serving on board ship on the high seas. In aircraft, shipbuilding and in both light and heavy engineering, they assumed posts calling for greater skill and responsibility in the United Kingdom than in the United States.

Even more important, the United Kingdom Government, unlike the United States Government, registered and required the services of women as a means of recruitment. The procedures developed by the Ministry of Labour and National Service after the passage of the Emergency Powers Act of 1940 and the National Service Act of 1941 allowed considerable choice to women in their assignment to war services; nevertheless, assertion of the State's power to press into service and to transfer into areas of vital need within the labour market women as well as men marked a new milestone in the changing status of women in Great Britain.

A corollary of registration was the intensification and expansion of the number of women with industrial and employment experience within the United Kingdom. The significance of that circumstance in relation to the future status of women within the country remains to be seen. Experience in the United States, by the very fact of its lesser extent, was not comparable in this regard. A logical result of registration and of the intensive use of womanpower in almost every field of endeavour has been a marked recognition by the British Government of the quality and quantity of the services rendered by women to the winning of the war.

Industry within the United Kingdom was peculiarly alert to new ways of using women. Both nations employed married women in larger numbers than before, and both found themselves utilising the services of mothers of young children, although both officially recommended that women with young children should be either exempt from war duty, as in the case of Great Britain, or encouraged to stay at home, as in the case of the United States. Industry in the United Kingdom, however, adapted itself to the use of the

part-time services of married women with home responsibilities; in the United States it did not do so. The matching of two part-time employees to perform the task of one full-time person was a well-developed device in British war industries.

Where civilian status is concerned, and in the activities of women in all branches of industry and the professions, a basic difference in methods of dealing with the problems of women's work is apparent in the two countries.

In the United States, with the guidance of the Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor and the aid of the Women's Advisory Committee of the War Manpower Commission, certain principles for dealing with women's employment were laid down. They concerned analysis of job content to discover areas of work that might utilise women's labour with safety and efficiency; equal pay for equal work as between men and women; and equality of treatment in upgrading and promotion, in seniority rights and in opportunities for vocational training and professional education.

Since it was advisory in nature, the statement of principle, in the United States, tended to exceed practice. Governmental machinery for implementing the standards laid down called for voluntary compliance, except for minimum wage legislation under the Fair Labor Standards Act and State minimum wage laws and for certain State laws calling for equal pay for equal work. The statement of principle undoubtedly liberalised the practice of the War Labor Board in allowing the raising of women's wages from substandard levels, although the Board declined to require such action. It encouraged the extension of women's opportunity and the equalising of status in Government programmes for education and vocational training, in some employment offices, and in some trade union contracts. The work of the Women's Bureau was outstanding in this respect.

In the United Kingdom no similar statement of principles was expounded. Actual practice, on the other hand, led to important developments in the opportunities opened up for women to work in the more skilled and better-paid occupations; to new provisions for vocational training and professional education; to greater development of industrial hygiene and welfare programmes within plants; and to more social services. Progress was considerable in the expansion of the social insurances even though differential rates of benefits for women continued. Barriers against the employment of married women were lowered.

The new status of women in the United Kingdom was exemplified by the changes in policy regarding the admission of women to war training programmes for skilled and semi-skilled trades. Equally

striking were the official policies regarding scholarship aid for women in higher and scientific education. An illustration was the establishment of the provision in 1945 that a "reasonable" proportion of women must be allowed entrance to medical schools if Government grants were to be allotted to the school. A similar greater concern with the position of women as compared with men is apparent in the British Civil Service. It should be remembered in this connection, however, that before the war the status of women in the Government services had already developed along progressive lines in the United States. Equality of payment and greater opportunity for administrative posts had been established in the United States federal service for some years.

This fact may have some bearing upon the greater progress made among Government agencies in the United States in adopting principles of equal pay for equal work in industry. The action of the National War Labor Board in recommending or approving wage increases supported the principle in several ways; 4 additional State legislatures, making a total of 6 States, including New York and Massachusetts, passed legislation outlawing sex discrimination in remuneration; and a bill for federal legislation along similar lines was introduced before Congress. In addition, many trade union contracts introduced the practice of equal payment for like work. Undoubtedly, again, the persistent work of the Women's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor influenced these developments in the United States.

Interest in the principle of equal pay for equal work has developed markedly in the United Kingdom, nevertheless, in war years. As the result of war experience and following popular pressure, the appointment of a Royal Commission to study and report upon the problem of equal pay for equal work may lead to important results. In addition, the position taken by the conference of women sponsored by the Women's Advisory Committee of the Trades Union Congress, indicating a determined stand in defence of the principles of equal treatment, and the report of the Trades Union Congress to the Royal Commission in the course of its hearings are evidence of a renewed interest arising from war experience.

#### POST-WAR OUTLOOK AND PROBLEMS

It is obvious in both countries that the position of women in the labour market in the years following the war must be related closely to the expectation of full employment. The greater utilisation of women during the war was the result of national necessity in both countries. Its actual extent was directly related

to the extent of the emergency. The needs of the labour market in post-war years must be recognised, consequently, as an important factor in the status of women's employment outside the home.

The outlook for full employment may be better in the United Kingdom than in the United States in the early post-war period. The economic situation resulting from the war in the United Kingdom, the relatively greater need for all the available labour force to rebuild devastated areas, to re-equip industry, and to re-establish goods and services which were discontinued during war years, would seem to call for a continued demand for labour of an unprecedented sort for peacetime. While the pent-up demand for goods is considerable in the United States and, if financial arrangements provided for it, the foreign market might expand also, the need for goods may be offset in part by the popular desire to return to pre-war conditions of the national economy. Opinions differ as to how high a level of production may be expected.

Government policies for promoting full employment, also, have a direct bearing upon this issue, in both countries. It may be influenced by plans to expand the economy of the nation and to offset the tendency of changing technology which continually requires less labour to produce a given volume of goods. Such Government policies are being advanced in the early post-war period more consistently in the United Kingdom than in the United States.

Full employment is not the only factor in the situation of women, however. Industrial techniques and savings to industry resulting from women's employment must also be taken into consideration.

The maintenance of a wage differential between men and women engaged in the same work exercises a direct influence upon the employment market. Equal payment for equal work without sex discrimination has been advocated for many years by women's organisations and by the majority of trade unionists. It may eventually become a part of public policy in both countries in order to forestall a disruption of the wage and employment structure which conceivably may follow the increased availability of women for many types of work if labour costs are relatively lower with women than with men. The argument of justice to women through equal pay for equal work, long advanced, is reinforced by the impact upon the employment and wage structure of the economy of both countries which the situation may produce. The pronouncement of the International Labour Conference in 1944 concerning equality for women in employment opportunities and wages receives added weight from these data.

The need of women to contribute to family support, either to supplement or to replace the husband's earnings, has also



proved to be an important factor in inducing women to seek paid work. It must be remembered that, without full employment, the use of women in manufacture, in certain professions, and in all varieties of services increased markedly in the decades after the First World War in the United States in contrast to the United Kingdom. A considerable expansion of a comparable sort has been predicted by 1950 for the United States after the Second World War.

Equally, the inducement for women to leave the traditional women-employing occupations, when better openings appear, will continue in post-war years in proportion as the labour market makes available opportunities to work under superior standards of work and wages. Sound policy in both nations is being considered, therefore, to call for the lifting of substandard wages, the regularisation of hours of work, and the extension of social insurance to occupations such as domestic service, if these occupations are to continue to attract women as heretofore, or to provide them with equitable protection once they are there. The provisions of the Recommendation of 1944 in this regard are also reinforced by war-time experience.

Obviously, the situation calls for the Governments to take action in establishing minimum wages and social insurance covering these occupations; for trade unions to intensify their effort to organise these women; and for employers or potential employers to be forward-looking in supporting programmes for improving standards of work and regularising methods of placement for workers in these fields.

Much credit must be given to the Government of the United Kingdom for its persistent attempts to improve the standards of work for such occupations as nursing and domestic service. Equally helpful have been the expansion of the social insurances as applied to married women, the improvement in maternity benefits, and the addition of children's allowances. The results of these administrative and legislative changes may be important in post-war years.

The war experience of these two countries has reinforced the need for a thoughtful and scientific outlook upon the hazards of accident and illness involved in women's employment. Women have proved themselves as capable of many types of work not hitherto open to them. Excessively heavy and hot labour, while accomplished in the United Kingdom in view of national necessity, is not likely to be continued except as mechanical aids reduce the strain of weight-lifting and heat for the worker. Accident rates in both countries would seem to correspond to experience

and education, as well as to safety provisions, rather than to sex differences as such, where the work was appropriate to physical structure. Appropriate clothing for women has been shown to be an important factor among safety provisions.

War experience nevertheless has shown again that because women carry burdens of child-bearing and rearing and of family responsibility that are peculiarly theirs, certain welfare services are important for reducing strains, lessening illness, and maintaining morale among women workers. Basic provisions for their welfare are essential for both men and women. All workers need measures and education for safety and the elimination of the hazards of occupational disease. All workers need adequate provisions for sanitation and reasonable comfort. For women workers it has been shown, moreover, that special welfare needs should include provision for day care for children as a service to the woman worker as well as to her children, and special consideration for pregnant and nursing women. The provision for pregnant and nursing women should include adequate and ensured leaves of absence during confinement, under publicly financed programmes; medical consultation which should be appropriate, skilled and readily available; and work transference on the basis of medical examination, as needed during pregnancy. These provisions have been shown to be increasingly essential as the proportion of women of child-bearing age has risen.

Opportunities for work in the better categories of employment, which the war brought to women, are not guaranteed for post-war years. The traditional classification of "women's labour", which rigidly deterred their entrance into a variety of occupations upon the basis of individual capacity rather than sex, needs still to be broken down in peace as well as wartime. Unquestionably in both countries the right of employment, the matter of suitability of work and availability for work in relation to unemployment insurance, and the opportunity for placement on the basis of individual characteristics are superior for men than for women. Status on the job, also, in such matters as seniority and promotion are more secure for men than women.

Much remains to be done to equalise the economic position of women in relation to men in both countries. Since, however, progress in this respect has tended to accompany social recognition of the value of women's labour in fields other than in the home, the war experience has added to the status of women in the economic life of both nations.

It is clear that the methods of dealing with the reconversion problems of women's employment will vary, not only in accordance

with the differing social and economic conditions and the industrial and social development of each country, but also in relation to the existing machinery for implementing social and economic programmes.

In other words, while broad principles have been put forward by governmental agencies in the United States regarding women's employment during the reconversion period and have not met with open opposition, the application of these principles calls for action principally of three kinds: promoting legislation, particularly as regards social security, wages and conditions of work; trade union activity, especially with the continuation of wartime development of joint machinery (in this respect effective steps have already been taken, as has been seen, when various trade union organisations catering for women agreed on a common policy and on standard trade union contract provisions safeguarding women's interests in industry); and a possible third method which may be used simultaneously, namely, the protection of women workers' right to employment suitable to their capabilities through the United States Employment Service, provided this agency remains in a position to apply a national policy.

On the other hand, in the United Kingdom, while there seems to be no general official policy regarding women's post-war employment, practical steps will undoubtedly continue to be taken. The Government may be expected to organise and raise the status of certain industries or occupations where trade unionism is not yet strong, and to improve social security schemes and social services. In industry, conditions will be largely determined by joint machinery for each branch of industry and much will depend on the bargaining power of the trade unions and on their attitude towards women workers. It is fairly safe to assume, given particularly the statements made during the war and after V-J Day by important trade union bodies, that the position of trade unions regarding the employment of women in industry has become substantially more favourable than formerly.

In both countries efforts are being made to eliminate discrepancies between policy and practice. In both countries, also, experience has reinforced the continued development of public policy that recognises the economic and social value of utilising and rewarding labour in accordance with individual capacity and job performance regardless of sex. A sound and scientific basis for the employment of women is being increasingly advocated as serving the cause of democracy and as promoting the general welfare.

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