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STATE OF MISSOURI

ss.

COUNTY OF JACKSON

My name is Fern Sigler. I am married, 27 years of age and reside at 951 Ohio Street, Kansas City, Kansas. I am unemployed at the present but I was employed from March 19, 1936, until April 23, 1937, by the Donnelly Garment Company. I started as an apprentice and was paid \$10.00 a week for the four weeks of my apprenticeship. At the end of that time I was put to work as a binder and, with the exception of a few times when I was called upon to do straight sewing, I worked throughout the entire time as a binder. When I started as a regular employee my minimum was \$15.00 a week but ordinarily I earned more than the minimum and there was never any complaint at any time from any of the supervisors, inspectors, or other officers of the Donnelly Garment Company concerning the character and type of my work. I was not laid off at the time of the seasonal lay-off when a large number of the employees were temporarily laid off.

I joined Local Union #274 of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union in Kansas City, Missouri, on the 11th day of March, 1937, and I am still a member in good standing of that local.

About the middle of March, 1937, Mrs. James A. Reed, the proprietor of the Donnelly Garment Company, addressed an assembly of all the workers on the second floor of the plant of the company located at 19th and Walnut Street in Kansas City, Missouri, and held in her hand a document which she said was "a letter from the union" demanding that she do certain things. She said that she did not intend to answer the letter but intended to make plans which would prevent the unionization of her shop and that she had called all of us together to say that if we would stand by her she would stand by us. She also stated at this time and on this occasion that the Donnelly Loyalty League was all the union her employees needed and that if any of us knew of an employee of hers belonging to the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union she wanted us to report that fact to her. The meeting was addressed by other speakers and lasted for more than

two hours. I was not allowed any compensation by the Donnelly Garment Company for the time I was required to spend in attendance at the meeting.

I did not wear any union pin to the Donnelly plant until April 22, 1937. Some of the girls observed the pin on the day I first wore it but nothing whatever was said that day about my affiliation with the union. When I went to work the next morning, April 23rd, I noticed the girls standing around in groups and not sitting at their machines as was the usual custom. After changing from my street dress to my working uniform, I went to my machine and the power was turned on. A few minutes thereafter, a large group of employees, probably 15 or 20 in number, surrounded me and demanded that I give them my Donnelly Loyalty League pin. I told them it had cost me 35 cents and one of the girls, at the suggestion of Ethel Carpenter, who was leading the group, gave me 35 cents and I gave her the Loyalty League pin. This group of girls then left and five or ten minutes thereafter a group of probably 50 or 75 girls surrounded my machine and began jeering at me and crying out to me to "go home, go home. We do not want you here." The second group was led by Mary Pointer and they crowded around me so closely that my chair was pushed under my machine and held so that I could not move. About that time someone turned the power off. My machine was on the end of the section and the girls stood not only in front and to the back of me but also in the aisle at the side of my machine. Inspectors were standing on tables. The girls hollered, clapped their hands, sang songs and gave the Donnelly Loyalty Yell. They continued yelling at me to go home and said that the money Mrs. Reed paid me must be hard for me to take when I belonged to an organization she did not want. I was held under my machine by this group for ten or 15 minutes, when Mrs. Ella Mae Hyde, the executive in charge of employment for the Donnelly Garment Company, came into the room and said, "Did you tell her she was not wanted here?" To which question many of the girls surrounding me replied "Yes." Mrs. Hyde then said to the girls, "All right, you may go back to your machines." Most of the girls then left, the power was turned on and I started to work again. Mrs. Hyde talked to my instructor, Pearl Collins and to Martha Gorman, the thread girl, but I didn't hear the conversation.

About five minutes thereafter a group of approximately 500 employees came on to

the 6th floor led by Mary Pointer and began singing "Hail, hail the gang's all here. What the hell do we care." There was much clapping of hands and shouting after the song had been sung. Martha Gorman, the thread girl, told this group that Ella Mae Hyde said after they had seen me to go back to their machines. A number left and a man whom I had never seen before came over and took a chair next to me. Before the group left, Mary Pointer stated that if she were a girl in my section she would refuse to work by me. Just after this man sat down by me another large group came through the door and among them was a man whom I had been told was the editor of the Donnelly Loyalty League News. Just after this group got on to the floor where I was working, the man who had sat down by me said to them, "Now you have seen her, maybe you had better go back to your machines." A few of them left but within three or four minutes the entire floor was filled with employees who gathered about me and Mary Pointer said "let's throw her out of the window." Another girl, a large blond, whose name I do not know, said, "Does she have her union pin on her? If she has, let's tear her clothes off." Just about that time, Mr. Baty, one of the executives of the Donnelly Garment company came to my machine and told me to come to the 7th floor, to the office. During the various disturbances which I have mentioned and which continued for approximately two hours, there was no work being done by the employees on my floor and no effort was made by the instructors, inspectors, or by Mrs. Wherry, who had charge of the entire floor, to stop the disturbances or to put the plant into operation.

Mr. Baty directed me to go into the office of Mrs. Blodgett, the nurse. We went in there and Ella Mae Hyde who was there when we arrived, and Mr. Baty went out and closed the door and I stood there a few moments before they came back with Mrs. Todd, President of the Donnelly Loyalty League, and a stenographer, whose name I do not know. Mrs. Todd said she could not understand what had induced me to do what I had done and I told her that I thought it was the best thing to do and that all the girls would be better off if they did the same thing. Mr. Baty asked me if I did not think it would be best for me to go home for a few days until the affair had quieted down and I asked him why I should go home when there was plenty of work to do and I needed my job. Mrs. Hyde said, "We are not getting any production, you can see that," and I stated that it seemed to

me an employer ought to be able to control employees or to fire them if they didn't do their work. Mrs. Todd asked me if I Joined the union of my own free will and I told her I certainly did. Mrs. Todd then wanted to know what the union had promised me and I told her shorter hours for one thing. Then Mr. Baty said I would have to go home for today but that I could come back and I told him that I would go home if he would give me a written statement to that effect, to which Mrs. Hyde replied "You don't want much, do you?" Mr. Baty then said that I must go home for today as he could not do anything with the girls and I asked him if it was a permanent lay-off and he said "No one fired you", so I got up and started out and Mr. Baty said he would like to have my pass and I told him that he had assured me I was not being fired and that I would have to have the pass to get back in. The last thing Mr. Baty told me was that they would call me and tell me when to come back to work. I have never had any call to return to work.

All of the conversation between Mr. Baty, Mrs. Hyde and myself was taken down in shorthand by this woman who was brought into the room by Mrs. Hyde and Mr. Baty.

During most of the time I worked at the Donnelly plant the hours were 9 hours from Monday to Friday, inclusive, and 8 hours on Saturday. For a short time during part of the winter months we worked only 8 hours a day and sometimes during the winter we had one or two Saturdays a month off.

Further affiant saith not.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this day of
1937.

Notary Public

My commission expires

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT WESTERN DIVISION, WESTERN DISTRICT
OF MISSOURI

No. 2924

DONNELLY GARMENT COMPANY, a Corporation, and DONNELLY GARMENT SALES
COMPANY, a Corporation,

Plaintiffs,

INTERNATIONAL LADIES GARMENT WORKERS' UNION, et al,

Defendants.

AFFIDAVIT OF FERN SIGLER (Copy)

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