

(COPY)

AFFIDAVIT OF
SYLVIA HULL

STATE OF MISSOURI

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COUNTY OF JACKSON

SYLVIA HULL, of lawful age, being duly sworn on oath states:

My name is Sylvia Hull. I am married; 31 years of age, and reside at 3020 Poplar Street, Kansas City, Missouri. My husband is a metal finisher by trade.

I was employed by the Donnelly Garment Company for eight years. I first went to work for the company in 1929. In 1933 I had a nervous breakdown and was unable to work for about 7 months. Prior to 1933 we had no minimum wage scale at the Donnelly Factory. We were required to work at such speed and under such high tension that it had a very bad effect on my nerves, and I blame that for the nervous breakdowns from which I suffered.

On the 18th of March, 1937, at about 4 o'clock P.M. all of the employees were directed to attend a meeting on the second floor. After we had assembled the meeting was addressed by several of the officers of the company, including Mrs. James A. Reed. During the meeting a letter was read from the Kansas City Joint Board of the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union to the Donnelly Garment Company. In addressing the assembled employees Mrs. Reed said there would be no union in the Donnelly Garment Company and neither Dubinsky nor any other "sky" could tell her now to run her business. In the meantime I had made an independent study of the workings of unions. I had become acquainted with the workings of unions and came to the conclusion that it was to my best interest to join the union, and on March 23rd, 1937, I joined Kansas City Local Union No. 274 of the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union of America, while I was still in the employ of the Donnelly plant. As far as I know no one

connected with the Donnelly plant knew of my affiliation with the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union until about April 22nd, 1937, when an article appeared in the Kansas City newspaper announcing that I had been chosen as one of the delegates to the annual convention of the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union.

When I reached the plant on the morning of April 23rd, 1937, about 7:20 o'clock Am., I changed my clothes in the locker room on the seventh floor and had started to my section and while on the way an employee, by the name of Iva Andrus, said to me, "What is this I see in the papers about you?," and in reply I merely laughed and made no definite answer. She then said, "I do not know what those kids are going to do, I am afraid for you to go in there." When I went to my machine, Irene Ross, a worker in the same section in which I worked, came to me and said, "Have you seen the paper", and I said, "Yes," and she said "I do not see how you ever had the nerve." I saw girls gathered in various groups on the floor. The power was turned on and immediately thereafter, a group of girls from the special section on the eighth floor, led by Mary Pointer, gathered around me and Mary Pointer, after making some remarks about joining the Union, said, "They say that you do not have to work, but we do. They say that under the Wagner Act you can belong to the Union, but we say you can't." After a few minutes they left. Shortly another group of girls came over, part of them being the ones who were in the first group, and asked for my Donnelly Loyalty League pin. I told them they could have it if they gave me back my 35¢. Marie Jameson, a worker in the special section, left and came back with 35¢ and demanded my pin. I told her that I had changed my mind and intended to keep it. She said, "You had better not let us catch you with it on, or we will tear your clothes off." A large group of girls continuously milled around where I was working, yelling and clapping their hands. Finally a girl came up with the 35¢ wrapped in toilet paper, put it on my machine and in unison the whole group said, "Now give us that pin." They then sang "Hail, hail, the gang's all here, what the hell do we care." Mary Pointer was the song leader.

Two girls, both workers in section 414, one of whom I knew as Hazel, came up to my machine and brought a clipping from the paper and said, "What does this mean?", and I said, "Nothing." Other people joined the group, and crowded up around me and

someone in the crowd said "You had better explain this." The instructor from my section, who was present, made no effort to send the crowd away.

About this time I asked for Mrs. Wherry, one of the officers whose desk is on the floor where I worked, and Basel and another girl said they would go get her. They came back advising me that Mrs. Wherry said she would not come because she was not a member of the Donnelly Loyalty League, but they said that Miss Todd, the president of the Donnelly Loyalty League, would come. Miss Todd did not appear. The girls then demanded that I get up and make a speech. Hazel turned the power off (this was in direct violation of the rules of the company, as only the instructor or the thread girl are permitted to turn the power off). I told them I would not make a speech, but that I would go to the office. Someone then said they would throw me out of the window. Shortly before this incident occurred Mrs. Bogard, a floor lady in the dividing department, on either the fourth or fifth floor, came on to my floor leading groups of girls at two different times and pointed me out to the girls. A large group of girls from the ninth floor, where the designing department is located, came down. My instructor, Lena Allison, was present but she made no effort to stop the disturbance, or send the girls to work, and only stood and laughed at me.

I went to the office on the seventh floor and a large group of the girls followed me, saying they were going to hear what I had to say. The crowd that followed me filled the floor where the office was and a girl, who assists Mrs. Ella Mae Hyde, was in the office. I asked her if I could come in and she said, "Not yet." The girls pressed close up around me and a man, whom I did not know, told me to go into the office and sit down, which I did. Some little time after I went into the office, Mrs. Ella Mae Hyde, the employment manager, together with Miss Todd, a stenographer whom I had never seen before, Miss Strickland, and a girl who is employed in the office, came into the office. Mrs. Hyde said, "Remember, you are making this statement because you want to." She then asked me about the article in the paper, inquired if the statements were true. I said, "Yes, but I did not know about the strike," and she replied, "You might have known that would go along with it." I also told her that I was selected from our local to go and that about five hundred members from this territory were going. She and Miss Todd both asked me for the

number of my local and I refused to give it to them. Miss Todd inquired about the number of members and I told her that I could not be exact, but I was told there were a large number of them in the Donnelly factory.

Miss Strickland, whose exact position I do not know, but who is said to hold a high position in the organization, said she would like to ask a question. She then said, "Just what does the Union promise you that we do not promise?" My reply was, "Shorter hours and more money for the work we were doing." She then said, "The girls on the cottons make more than \$13.00 per week," and I said, "Cottons do not determine the wage, but it should be fixed by the price the dress sells for and besides the girls here have to work so hard it wears them out in a few years." Mrs. Hyde spoke up and said, "Well, you have been here eight years and are you worn out?", and I said, "I am pretty nervous and I had to take time off last fall because I needed a rest." Then I told her that after I had been off three months and returned In November, 1936, I felt fine and thought I could do the work all right, but we had to work 53 hours a week, which was too much. Mrs. Hyde then said, "We have a right to work longer hours in our busy season." I also told her that after my return and after she told me I did not have to work more than forty hours that I was was not given sufficient work to do and that my checks dropped from \$31.00 to \$25.00 to \$17.00. I also told her that I had been discriminated against since I had refused to sign the petition and other girls who had refused to sign had been laid off. The petition to which I refer was one brought to me by Mrs. Mary Spofers. All employees were asked to sign the petition, or statement, which was addressed to Mrs. Reed, and recited that signers were well pleased with the hours and conditions of work and happy in their employment. The reason I refused to sign was because we were then working 53 hours a week which I thought was too long. After discussing the matter of the petition, Mrs. Hyde asked me to go home. I told her that I would go home, but I did not want to quit work, but she said I would have to go home for that day. She took my identification pass and told me she would come down and let me in, if I still had a job. Although I never had any complaints about the character of my work during the eight years of my employment and was not even given seasonal lay offs, I have not been called back to work since I was told to go home on April 23rd, 1937.

My discharge from the Donnelly firm occurred on the 33rd of April, 1937, and I was unemployed until about two weeks ago when I went to work for the Quality Hill Silk Dress Factory where I am now employed. During this period of unemployment I have had a return to normal health and have worked for the last two weeks at my new employment without any unusual strain or the fatigue that I experienced while working at the Donnelly plant.

Further affiant saith not.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this day of _____ 1937.

My Commission expires:

Notary Public

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

v.

INTERNATIONAL LADIES GARMENT WORKERS' UNION, et al

Defendants

AFFIDAVIT OF SYLVIA HULL (COPY)

FRANK P. WALSH JEROME WALSH

ATTORNEYS FOR DEFENDANTS