

Labor INFORMATION BULLETIN

APRIL 1945

Guaranteed Employment and Annual Wage Provisions Cover Few

Guaranteed employment or annual wages were provided for approximately 42,500 workers by agreements in effect during 1944—seventy-one percent of such workers being employed by small companies in the service and distributive industries as against 29 percent employed in manufacturing industries.

Some plans guaranteed a specified number of weeks' or hours' work each year; others guaranteed a weekly income throughout the year regardless of employment fluctuations.

Most plans were limited in scope; some restricted the guaranty to particular groups of workers; others provided less than a year's guaranteed employment; and some permitted the employer to cancel or reduce guaranties under specified circumstances.

See Three Billion in Post-War Public Construction

Value of public construction probably will average three billion dollars annually—at 1940 cost levels—in the first five years after Japan's defeat. This estimate is based on the assumption that the construction will be limited to projects for which an immediate need is recognized other than creation of employment.

Largest single type of prospective construction is work on highways, roads, and streets—\$1.3 billion a year. Largest and most urgently needed building construction is schools—\$400 million annually.

Plans of public bodies have advanced markedly but must be accelerated to avoid delay in starting construction in many localities.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

FRANCES PERKINS, Secretary

Drive Prevents 50,000 Meat Packing Accidents

More than 50,000 job accidents were prevented in slaughter houses and meat packing plants in the 3 months of 1944 as a result of the coordinated drive sponsored by the United States Department of Labor and participated in by labor management and national safety agencies. The reduction saved \$2,456,000 to the meat industry and workers. The Labor Department's allotment of staff and resources in the drive was \$50,000.

The meat safety drive was organized at a Washington conference last May where trade and labor organizations met with department officials and the agencies and pledged 100 percent cooperation with the Labor Department's drive for a few accidents.

3 months beginning July 1, all slaughterhouses and meat packing plants received safety information from departmental safety engineers, safety men from their workmen's compensation insurance companies, the Red Cross and other agencies throughout the country. Safety training classes were held in engineering colleges and elsewhere for supervisors in the industry, foremen, and union representatives. Technical safety information was provided on measuring accident frequency, detecting and correcting hazards, organizing safety committees, and enlisting worker cooperation.

Another objective of the drive was to establish a safety record in the meat industry and labor safety programs to begin when the drive terminated. The comparison of safety record for the 3 months of last year with the drive shows the beneficial effects of the program.

Many Post-War Employment Chances With Air Lines

Tens of thousands of men in Army, Navy, and Marine forces will want post-war jobs in commercial aviation as will many young people leaving the service. Air lines—major branch of commercial transportation—will have marked post-war gains in employment.

Following estimates are based on varying rates of traffic 5 years after the war. Based on conservative traffic forecast, pilots might number about 2,000 more than in late 1944; more optimistic prediction the increase,

The monetary savings represented \$2,252,000 for management and \$204,000 to labor in wage losses eliminated. In addition, 1,700 serious accidents and 51,000 minor injuries were prevented. The Nation's war effort gained at least 34,000 man-days of production.

The savings reported were based on studies of the accident experience of the meat industry by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. In 1943 there was an average of 187,000 employees in the industry. The Bureau's estimate of 19,430 disabling injuries for that year represents an average of 103.6 disabling injuries for each 1,000 workers during the year, or 51.8 disabling injuries per 1,000 workers in each 6-month period.

In the last half of 1944 employment in the industry averaged about 174,400. Applying the 6-months accident frequency rate for 1943, there should have been about 9,000 disabling injuries during the period. Estimates actually indicate only about 7,300 such injuries. Applying standard cost figures, the 7,300 injuries cost industry \$9,673,000 instead of \$11,925,000 for 9,000 injuries; the actual injuries cost workers \$876,000 instead of \$1,080,000 for the number.

The Bureau's analysts point out that the 7 percent decline in employment in 1944 over the preceding period might account for some decrease in accidents and that factors other than the drive might have made the industry more safety conscious. However, the dwindling supply of skilled labor and the wearing out of equipment might be expected to raise the accident rate.

would be 10,000. Mechanics and related personnel are likely to total 20,000 to 40,000—roughly 6,500 to 26,500 more than at close of 1944 depending on the forecast used.

For stewardesses and ground-communications operators also, marked employment gains are in sight even if traffic growth is moderate. Wartime employment of navigators, flight engineers, flight radio operators, dispatchers, meteorologists, and stock and stores employees is so high that sizable employment gains in these occupations will depend on heavy expansion in air traffic.

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Women's Wartime Earnings Are Still Low

In spite of widespread interest in women's wartime earnings, there have been few sources to show in any generally representative way just what these are and how they square with living costs. The late figures presented here, assembled and discussed by the Women's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor, give some idea of what women do receive and how inadequate such income may be to meet their needs.

Women in manufacturing industries in Illinois in November 1944 averaged \$34.07 a week. From this amount would be withheld, in the case of a woman self-supporting with no dependents, \$4.90 for income tax and about 34 cents for social security, leaving a take-home wage of \$28.83; this with no allowance for bond purchases, not uncommonly 10 percent of wages. The National Industrial Conference Board's country-wide reports on earnings in 25 manufacturing industries give an average for women in November 1944 of \$31.78, or \$27.16 after tax deductions. While many women have dependents, tax deductions throughout the following discussion are based on self-support only.

In New York State it is possible to compare average weekly earnings of women in manufacturing with the estimated cost of living as reported by the New York Department of Labor. A survey in the fall of 1944 indicated that a woman living as a member of her family—as do about 80 percent of the women workers in the State—required \$1,643.53 a year to maintain an adequate standard of living and contribute her fair share to the family fund. The total included taxes and an investment in bonds. To secure this amount a woman would need earnings that averaged \$31.61 a week for the 52 weeks.

Average weekly earnings of women wage earners in all manufacturing in New York State in September 1944 were \$34.82, thus more than covering the estimated cost of living. However, the averages in several important industry groups, as the following shows, fell below this amount. Moreover, averages always conceal the plight of the considerable numbers of individuals who receive less than the average.

Food and kindred products.....	\$26. 01
Tobacco manufactures.....	26. 58
Textile-mill products.....	27. 52
Paper and allied products.....	26. 26
Printing, publishing, and allied industries.....	27. 87
Chemicals and allied products.....	27. 98
Leather and leather products.....	28. 29

New York women making wearing apparel and such fabricated textiles as bed linen and draperies averaged \$37.94 a week. However, women in individual industries in this group could not, on the average, afford the New York standard of living:

Men's and boys' furnishings, work clothing, etc.....	\$27. 39
Women's undergarments and accessories.....	28. 62
Miscellaneous apparel accessories.....	28. 19
Miscellaneous fabricated textiles.....	27. 49

There are no figures on employment of women in New York manufacturing industries later than those of May 1944, but at that time 42 percent of the women wage earners in manufacturing were in industries with average earnings of less than \$31.61. According to the State Industrial Commissioner, no figures are available to show how many individual women had earnings below the average. From census data for 1940 it appears that only about 18 percent of the women workers in New York were operatives in manufacturing, while 25 percent were service workers, likely to have even lower earnings; moreover, 34 percent were in clerical and sales occupations, large proportions of whom also are likely to receive less than manufacturing operatives. Estimates in previous years have indicated that less than half the employed women in the State were earning adequate incomes.

The Illinois Department of Labor is the only source for reports of average earnings in any non-manufacturing industry. Such earnings in trade and certain services in November 1944 were as follows:

	Average gross weekly earnings	Net after tax deductions
Department and variety stores.....	\$13. 14	\$12. 41
Apparel stores.....	26. 06	22. 50
Hotels.....	20. 27	18. 07
Restaurants.....	20. 57	18. 36
Laundering, cleaning, and dyeing.....	21. 16	18. 75

Much interest is felt in what women are earning in the field of war production—in plants making ships, planes, machinery, and the like. There are here presented women's average gross earnings in some of these industries, and the net remaining for take-home pay after income tax and 10 percent for bonds have been deducted:

nd source of figures	Average gross weekly earnings	Average after deductions for—	
		Taxes	Taxes and bonds
November 1944): ical machinery ortation equip- t----- ndustrial Confer- ard (November	\$38. 47	\$32. 29	\$28. 44
ft----- obiles----- cals----- r products----- ilding----- (September 1944): nery (including rical) ortation equip- t----- cals----- r goods-----	43. 22	35. 99	31. 67
	45. 55	37. 89	33. 33
	48. 97	40. 68	35. 78
	32. 76	27. 93	24. 65
	38. 68	32. 49	28. 62
	52. 58	43. 35	38. 09
	37. 62	31. 64	27. 88
	44. 72	37. 27	32. 80
	27. 98	24. 20	21. 40
	32. 73	27. 90	24. 63

National Industrial Conference Board weekly salary rates of clerical workers, ated by sex, in October 1944. For com- with the requirements of an adequate of living in New York City, said to be week, the Conference Board's rates for are presented for certain of these occupa- t ordinarily are especially large woman- s:

Army Depots Find Women Valuable Workers

movement of the materials of war from ry to the field where they are to be used, apply depots play an important part. as 1943 women were nearly a third of rs in 12 representative depots studied by en's Bureau of the United States Depart- Labor. The survey was made at the of certain depot commanders and zone assist them in deciding on what additional 7 might employ women, since the Army Forces had requested them to aim at percent of their positions with women. lts of the study also may be of value to ial warehousing establishments. A good s found to have been made through the odern mechanized equipment, scientific l, and job-organization practices. depots receive, inspect, store, and issue nent hundreds of thousands of items, ary greatly in type, size, and weight. ock includes cartons of aspirin, X-ray s, complete equipment for hospital units; ive parts and tools; 1,000- and 2,000-pound

	Low	Median	High
Calculating-machine operator-----	\$22	\$34	\$46
File clerk-----	16	26	48
Stenographer-----	19	31	55
Telephone switchboard operator----	18	32	45
Senior copy typist-----	20	30	47

The War Manpower Commission has issued a statement giving information on various areas as a guide to the Employment Service in placing workers.¹ This gives, among other data, begin- ning hourly rates offered women in a number of industries (chiefly manufacturing) in 137 areas. In most cases several rates are quoted for each area. The extreme range of these hourly rates for all areas in November 1944 was from 30 cents (reported twice) to \$1.10 (reported once). How- ever, in 51 areas the low rate was 40 cents; in 18 it was 45 cents; in 31 areas, 50 cents. These rates would give women net earnings after deductions for taxes of \$18.59, \$20.47, and \$22.44, respectively, for a 48-hour week. Since the National War Labor Board has allowed employers to raise sub- standard rates without prior board approval, and has defined such rates as those below 50 cents an hour, some of these rates for women just cited may be considered below acceptable standards.

¹ Labor Market Information for United States Employment Service Counseling, Area Statements, January-February 1945.

bombs; boxes of underwear; cannons, tanks, jeeps In general the work involves handling and packing rather than production, but repair of some sup- plies requires production work. In repair processes the utilization of women, which is considerable, depends chiefly on the size and weight of the materials handled.

Obviously a great deal of clerical work is necessary in depot operation, and in depots where separate figures on office jobs were obtained in the survey the proportion of women among all clerical workers varied from 45 to 89 percent.

Women checkers are employed extensively in many parts of the establishment; materials re- ceived may even be checked by women before being removed from box cars. Women verify the type and quantity of the supplies received, and note such information as lot, stock, and contract number, weight, size of box, car and seal number, consignor and consignee, and so forth. Fre- quently they must observe whether boxes and crates are correctly marked, whether containers are damaged, and make written or oral reports

on the condition of shipments received. Practi- cally all depots employ women as checkers, often in large numbers.

In removing stock from boxcars to warehouses various types of mechanized equipment are used, and women have been found skillful and safe operators of trucks and cars. Fork lift trucks— relatively small vehicles equipped to pick up and deposit stacks of packing cases or crates—are used extensively. The trucks have heavy protruding forks at the front, which the driver manipulates by levers, raising or lowering the forks and guiding them under skids or crates, or into the pallets on which supplies are stacked. She may drive into a boxcar or truck, pick up a load, transport it to the designated storage space, and deposit it by the reverse process of guiding it into place and pulling out the forks. In one depot a warehouse bay containing 30,000 boxes, each weighing from 100 pounds to a ton, was pointed out as an example of a fine stacking operation done by a woman. In addition to fork lift trucks, women operate cargo, tow, and trailer trucks, carry-alls, pick-up cars, jeeps, and so on. Great skill is required on the crowded platforms and ramps and in the limited aisle spaces, and the women are praised as careful drivers.

A large number of women do hand loading and unloading and stacking of military supplies or of lumber, boxes, or other materials used in depot operation. Much of this work is done in open or semiopen areas. Some women are hookers, putting on or taking off crane hooks from huge crates and steadying the crates as they are loaded or deposited. The foreman of a crew of women handling lumber in the open said they work efficiently in bitter cold or hot sun. In winter they climb over high stacks of sleet- covered lumber without accident or complaint. It was said that they do not lift so much at a time as men, but they work so steadily and well that by the end of the day they have done as much work as the men they replace.

Supplies brought to the depot are soon moved out again in response to orders, and storekeepers are in charge of the sequence of receiving, storage, and removal. Women storekeepers are employed in several of the depots, some of them being responsible for entire sections in the warehouses. They allocate space, break down shipments, fill bins or shelves, replenish stock by requisition, fill orders, maintain records of stock issued, and keep all in an orderly state.

In some depots where supplies are stored or issued in small quantities hundreds and sometimes

thousands of small articles must be inspected, identified, and their storage location indicated when shipments are received, and must be located and selected when orders are filled. In a number of depots women do some or all of this work. In one warehouse where small orders are filled, there is a special order-filling crew with a woman supervisor. She assigns the filling of orders to different girls who know the location of various items, select and stack them on hand trucks, and tag them with the necessary informa- tion. The woman in charge has a woman assist- ant in each wholesale warehouse who knows the location of and can identify materials needed to replenish stock in the small-order warehouse.

One of the most highly skilled jobs in ordnance depots is that of ammunition inspector and women are so employed in about half the depots that store ammunition and high explosives. Some of these women inspect the ammunition igloos for dampness, ventilation, cleanliness, proper stacking, and against overloading. They check doors, door ventilators, and drainage; they open and inspect cars in which ammunition arrives. They may inspect the ammunition itself, sometimes taking shells and powder out of containers and refilling them. At times they watch workers who load and unload ammunition, to see that the work is done safely and to teach safe methods.

The Army Service Forces stresses that "Safe delivery begins in the packing room." While most of the packing work is simple, it must be done properly or supplies will not reach their destination in perfect condition. The work of women, which is extensive and varied, includes the following: Bringing supplies or empty boxes to the packing lines; wrapping individual items or packages; lining boxes with water-repellant paper; assembling into containers the required types and quantities of items; checking the contents; wrapping, closing, and sealing or nailing boxes and crates; marking boxes for export identification; staining boxes and crates; making handles for crates, nailing them on, and banding together as many as 12 large boxes, or wiring packed boxes or crates. Often this work is done by assembly-line methods. Women work with hand tools and machines on the making of boxes and crates and are said to be good at this work.

The maintenance of military supplies in a condi- tion ready for use involves a considerable amount of inspection, assembling, repair, and renovation work, and some of this is done by women in practically every depot. Most depots also have women on the guard force, in the transportation section, and in custodial work.

Employment and Pay Rolls

The total number of employees in nonagricultural establishments in February was 38 million, an increase of 3,000 over January. Between February 1944 and February 1945, nonagricultural employment declined 840,000, while the armed forces increased by 1½ million.

MANUFACTURING

Wage-earner employment for manufacturing as a whole declined 17,000 between January and February.

In the durable goods group, the over-all decline of 11,000 reflects, mainly, curtailed production of ships. The transportation equipment group reported a decrease of 32,000 workers, in spite of employment increases in the aircraft and aircraft engines industries. The largest January-February increase was in the iron and steel group which added 12,000 workers to increase production in the bag and shell loading, heavy ammunition and blast furnace industries.

The decline of 6,000 wage-earners in the non-durable goods group was localized almost entirely in the food and textile mill products groups. A decrease in receipts of livestock plus a seasonal decline in canning were mainly responsible for the

drop of 12,000 workers in the food group. Offsetting the sizable declines in the food and textile groups, was the addition of 10,000 workers to the chemicals group. This increase was mostly in plants manufacturing small-arms ammunition and explosives.

Weekly earnings for all manufacturing averaged \$47.52 in January, only a few cents above the December level, but over \$2 more than a year ago. Between December and January, weekly earnings declined slightly in the durable goods group, but this was offset by a small increase in earnings in the nondurable group. Since January 1944, weekly earnings in the durable group have increased by \$2.34 and those in the nondurable group by \$2.62.

MINING

Anthracite miners averaged \$3.50 less in January than in December, while bituminous miners earned about \$4 more. In the former industry, there was a more wide-spread observance of the New Year's holiday, reflected in the shortening of the work-week by 2½ hours. Bituminous miners worked over 2 hours longer per week in January than in December.

Estimated number of wage earners and average weekly earnings in manufacturing industries by major industry groups
(Adjusted to Bureau of Employment Security final 1942 and preliminary 1943 data)

Industry groups	Estimated number of wage earners (thousands)			Average weekly earnings		
	February 1945 ¹	January 1945	February 1944	January 1945	December 1944	January 1944
ALL MANUFACTURING	13,095	13,112	14,254	\$47.52	\$47.45	\$45.29
<i>Durable goods</i>	<i>7,785</i>	<i>7,796</i>	<i>8,698</i>	<i>53.55</i>	<i>53.68</i>	<i>51.21</i>
Iron and steel and their products	1,669	1,657	1,730	51.65	51.85	50.14
Electrical machinery	697	698	769	49.76	49.43	47.04
Machinery, except electrical	1,167	1,163	1,272	55.88	56.05	54.69
Transportation equipment, except automobiles	2,050	2,082	2,533	62.73	63.29	57.91
Automobiles	683	682	753	59.38	58.41	58.86
Nonferrous metals and their products	404	398	453	50.80	50.83	48.79
Lumber and timber basic products	451	450	484	33.65	33.62	31.77
Furniture and finished lumber products	339	338	358	37.57	37.48	34.24
Stone, clay, and glass products	325	328	346	39.80	40.35	37.53
<i>Nondurable goods</i>	<i>5,310</i>	<i>5,316</i>	<i>5,556</i>	<i>38.65</i>	<i>38.41</i>	<i>36.03</i>
Textile mill products and other fiber manufactures	1,075	1,083	1,163	30.80	30.98	28.30
Apparel and other finished textile products	835	837	909	32.43	31.35	28.99
Leather and leather products	310	311	317	34.75	34.27	31.35
Food	1,001	1,013	1,013	39.50	39.79	38.43
Tobacco manufactures	82	82	87	31.96	33.20	28.42
Paper and allied products	310	309	320	40.25	40.40	37.24
Printing, publishing, and allied industries	329	328	338	46.03	45.84	42.49
Chemicals and allied products	638	628	655	44.33	44.06	42.91
Products of petroleum and coal	133	133	127	55.59	55.95	52.99
Rubber products	196	196	204	54.51	52.63	48.18
Miscellaneous industries	401	396	423	45.54	45.04	42.73
Selected nonmanufacturing industries						
Anthracite mining	(2)	65.4	69.8	44.81	48.39	45.05
Bituminous coal mining	338	338	370	54.25	50.39	52.50
Metalliferous mining	68.7	69.0	88.6	45.07	45.89	43.70
Iron	23.0	23.3	28.9	40.31	40.66	40.18
Copper	22.1	22.3	30.0	47.34	49.61	45.99
Lead and zinc	15.0	15.0	18.7	48.27	48.03	45.08
Gold and silver	5.7	5.5	6.4	44.72	44.01	42.47
Miscellaneous	2.9	2.9	4.6	48.73	48.47	44.30
Hotels (year-round) ³	357	355	352	23.71	24.04	21.50
Power laundries	238	240	250	28.10	27.83	26.29
Cleaning and dyeing	76.1	75.6	77.1	31.68	48.84	46.78
Electric light and power ³	201	200	204	50.15	49.71	45.69
Street railways and busses ³	231	228	232	39.49	39.74	37.28
Telephone ³	403	401	407	37.14	37.02	36.16
Telegraph ³	45.2	45.2	47.1			

¹ Preliminary.

² Not available.

³ Includes salaried personnel.

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Public Employment

An increase of 27,000 employment in war agencies within continental United States in February 1945 represented the first sizeable expansion since the summer of 1944. The Navy Department accounted for 19,000, the War Department for 7,000, and the War Shipping Administration for 1,000, of the rise. Other agencies showed a rise of 2,000 in February which was mostly in the Treasury Department and Veterans' Administration. The Tennessee Valley Authority showed a decrease of 1,300 employees.

War-agency employment outside continental United States is now over the half-million mark (552,000) and since April 1944 has been increasing at an average rate of almost 20,000 a month.

In February 1945, Federal employment (including employment in the executive, legislative, and judicial branches, and in Government corporations) totalled 3½ million with war agencies constituting 75 percent. This represented an increase during the preceding year of 238,000 with a slight increase in the proportion of employees in war agencies.

Employment in regular Federal Services and in Government corporations, January and February 1945
(In thousands)

Service	February 1945 ¹	January 1945
Total	3,500.6	3,449.8
Executive ²	3,457.3	3,406.7
War agencies	2,609.5	2,561.1
Continental United States	2,057.4	2,030.3
Outside continental United States	552.1	530.8
Other agencies	847.8	845.6
Continental United States	831.5	829.4
Outside continental United States	16.3	16.2
Judicial	2.6	2.6
Legislative	6.6	6.2
Government corporations ³	34.1	34.3

¹ Preliminary.

² Includes employees in United States navy yards who are also included under shipbuilding and employees on force-account construction who are also included under construction.

³ Data are for employees on the Panama Railroad Company, the Federal Reserve Banks, and banks of the Farm Credit Administration who are paid out of operating revenues and not out of Federal appropriations. Data for other Government corporations are included under the executive service.

Employment on shipbuilding and repair.—Employment on the Government's shipbuilding program (including repair) decreased 46,000 in February 1945. All regions were affected, but the Pacific region was affected to the greatest extent (15,600) and the Great Lakes region to the smallest (600).

Employment in private shipyards declined 270,600 in the year February 1944 to February 1945 and 325,000 since the peak in November 1943. The steady decline in employment in private shipyards since the peak has been owing to the gradual completion of contracts and to the fact that few new contracts have been let.

Total employment and pay rolls in United States navy yards and private shipyards within continental United States by shipbuilding region, January and February 1945
(In thousands)

Shipbuilding region	Employment		Pay rolls	
	February 1945 ¹	January 1945	February 1945 ¹	January 1945
All regions	1,400.0	1,446.0	\$398,932	\$425,809
U. S. navy yards ²	327.3	326.6	94,237	94,065
Private shipyards	1,072.7	1,119.4	304,695	331,744
North Atlantic	512.6	516.1	155,183	156,157
South Atlantic	123.8	128.8	32,907	33,769
Gulf	177.5	191.9	50,593	55,893
Pacific	490.7	506.3	134,604	151,808
Great Lakes	50.1	50.7	13,860	14,023
Inland	45.3	52.2	11,785	14,159

¹ Preliminary.

² Includes all navy yards constructing or repairing ships, including the Curtis Bay (Md.) Coast Guard yard.

Estimated employment and pay rolls on construction within continental United States, January and February 1945
(In thousands)

Type of project	Employment		Pay rolls	
	February 1945 ¹	January 1945	February 1945 ¹	January 1945
New construction, total ²	662.3	651.8	(3)	(3)
At the construction site	550.9	537.6	(3)	(3)
Federal projects ⁴	165.9	165.9	\$37,385	\$35,828
Airports	7.0	7.9	1,215	1,471
Buildings	111.5	107.4	26,541	24,231
Residential	10.8	11.2	2,524	2,581
Nonresidential ⁵	100.7	96.2	24,017	21,650
Electrification	.4	.3	84	36
Reclamation	6.8	7.3	1,580	1,760
River, harbor, and flood control	15.1	16.3	2,997	3,184
Streets and highways	7.4	7.9	1,337	1,379
Water and sewer systems	3.8	3.7	577	574
Miscellaneous	13.9	15.1	3,054	3,193
Non-Federal projects	385.0	371.7	(3)	(3)
Buildings	228.4	210.2	48,878	48,346
Residential	71.9	73.7	(3)	(3)
Nonresidential	156.5	136.5	(3)	(3)
Farm	43.2	47.0	(3)	(3)
Public utilities	87.8	85.6	(3)	(3)
Streets and highways	11.9	15.2	(3)	(3)
State	4.2	5.5	(3)	(3)
County and municipal	7.7	9.7	(3)	(3)
Miscellaneous	13.7	13.7	(3)	(3)
Other ⁶	111.4	114.2	(3)	(3)
Maintenance of State roads ⁷	85.0	85.0	(3)	(3)

¹ Preliminary.

² Data are for all construction workers (contract and force-account) engaged on new construction, additions, and alterations, and on repair work of the type usually covered by building permits. The construction figure included in the Bureau's nonagricultural employment series covers only employees of construction contractors and on Federal force-account, and excludes force-account workers of State and local governments, public utilities, and private firms.

³ Data not available.

⁴ Includes the following force-account employees hired directly by the Federal Government, and their pay rolls: January 1945, 19,817, \$3,964,793; and February 1945, 19,355, \$3,729,396. These employees are also included under the Federal executive service; all other workers were employed by contractors and subcontractors.

⁵ Includes the following employees and pay rolls for the Defense Plant Corporation (DPC) projects: January, 1945, 12,368, \$2,787,114; February 1945, 10,064, \$2,668,598.

⁶ Includes central office force of construction contractors, shop employees of special trades contractors, such as bench sheet-metal workers, etc., and site employees engaged on projects which, for security reasons, cannot be shown above.

⁷ Data for other types of maintenance not available.

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Cost of Living and Retail Costs of Food--February 1945

There were only minor changes in retail prices of most staples purchased by moderate-income city families during the month ending February 15. The continued decline in egg prices, normal for this season of the year, was the chief cause of a decrease of 0.6 percent in average food prices and 0.2 percent in prices of living essentials.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics cost of living index for February 15, 1945 is 126.8 percent of the 1935-39 average and 2.4 percent above the level of one year ago.

Prices of the family food budget, excluding eggs, were comparatively stable. Prices were higher for onions, spinach, potatoes, and sweetpotatoes, while lettuce, oranges, green beans, and cabbage prices were lower, as new crop shipments reached retail markets and "disaster" ceilings were removed from some crops. On the average, fresh fruit and vegetable prices declined slightly. Eggs, which represent about 6½ percent of the average family's food costs, dropped seasonally by 9.7 percent during the month, and are expected to show a further decline in March.

Clothing prices rose 0.2 percent between mid-January and mid-February with scattered advances for costs of many clothing articles, resulting from continued short supplies of medium and low-priced merchandise. Women's percale house-dresses and rayon underwear and men's cotton socks and woolen suits showed the largest cost increases over the month.

Housefurnishings prices rose slightly (0.1 percent) due to scattered increases in prices of bedroom furniture, gas stoves, wool rugs, and sheets. February furniture sales this year were not as widespread as usual. Housefurnishings indexes for February reflect in some cities, in addition to the price movement of the month, a downward adjustment of costs of some goods of pre-war quality, especially spring-filled living room furniture. These adjustments were based on additional price information which has become available as these goods have moved into retail stores in greater volume than at any other time since their reappearance early in 1944.

Higher coal prices caused an 0.3 percent rise over the month in average prices of the fuel, electricity and ice group. Retail coal and coke dealers, restricted to one-ton deliveries by order of the Solid Fuels Administrator for War, in February were permitted by OPA to raise their delivery prices 25 cents a ton in cases where this price differential had not been previously charged.

Miscellaneous goods and services remained practically unchanged (up 0.1 percent). Charges for haircuts were raised in two cities and cigarettes cost more in two cities as customers could no longer buy more than one package at a time.

Rents were not surveyed in February.

Cost of Living in 21 Large Cities

Area and city	Index as of Feb. 15, 1945 (1935-39 = 100)	Percent of change from—		
		Jan. 15, 1945, to Feb. 15, 1945	Feb. 15, 1944, to Feb. 15, 1945	Aug. 15, 1939, to Feb. 15, 1945
Average: Large cities	126.8	-0.2	+2.4	+28.6
North Atlantic:				
Boston	123.3	-0.2	+2.4	+27.0
Buffalo	127.6	+0.2	+2.1	+29.5
New York	127.4	-0.4	+2.6	+28.7
Philadelphia	126.4	+0.4	+2.8	+29.2
Pittsburgh	128.0	-0.1	+3.2	+30.1
South Atlantic:				
Baltimore	129.9	+0.2	+3.5	+31.6
Savannah	135.1	+0.2	+2.2	+36.1
Washington, D. C.	126.0	-0.1	+2.5	+27.8
North Central:				
Chicago	125.6	-0.2	+2.7	+27.3
Cincinnati	126.6	-0.3	+2.6	+30.1
Cleveland	129.6	-0.2	+1.4	+29.6
Detroit	127.5	+0.1	+2.5	+29.4
Kansas City	125.0	-0.1	+2.5	+26.8
Minneapolis	123.2	0	+1.7	+23.6
St. Louis	125.1	-0.3	+2.3	+27.5
South Central:				
Birmingham	130.5	-0.6	+2.7	+32.5
Houston	124.8	-0.2	+1.5	+23.9
Western:				
Denver	125.9	-0.2	+2.7	+27.7
Los Angeles	128.6	-0.4	+2.2	+28.0
San Francisco	131.2	-0.6	+3.3	+32.1
Seattle	130.6	-0.3	+2.3	+30.2

The BLS index indicates average changes in retail prices of selected goods, rents, and services, bought by families of wage earners and lower-salaried workers in large cities. The items covered represented 70 percent of the expenditures of families who had incomes ranging from \$1,250 to \$2,000 in 1934-36.

The index does not show the full war time effect on the cost of living of such factors as lowered quality, disappearance of low-priced goods, and forced changes in housing and eating away from home.

It does not measure changes in total "living costs"—that is, in the total amount families spend for living. Income taxes and bond subscriptions are not included.

For a description of the methods used in computing the index, ask for "Description of the Cost of Living Index of the Bureau of Labor Statistics." For an appraisal of the factors enumerated above, see the report of the President's Committee on the Cost of Living, November 17, 1944.