

Purchasing Power Of Workers Show 36 Per Cent Increase

Washington — The average worker's purchasing power rose 36 per cent from 1939 to 1948. This is shown in a publication of the Labor Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics dealing with a survey of annual earnings of workers covered by the Federal Social Security program.

In actual dollars the average worker's pay rose more than 133 per cent from 1939 to 1948. But when price increases during that period are discounted, the bureau said, the worker is 36 per cent better off in terms of things he can buy with the dollars.

The average annual earnings rose from \$1,113 in 1939 to \$2,600 in 1948. This was caused by a rapid rise in wage rates and introduction of substantial overtime work during the war.

As of 1947, the publication

said, roughly one-tenth of the workers earned less than \$1,000; one-third, between \$1,000 and \$2,000; another third, between \$2,000 and \$3,000, and the remainder, or almost one-fourth of the workers, more than \$3,000.

Among regularly employed male workers in 1947 at least half of them received over \$2,370, at least half of the female workers received under \$1,000. Over 40 per cent of the males earned \$3,000 or more as against 43 per cent of the female workers.

The 40-44 age group showed the highest annual earnings rate. The median for workers under 20 years of age was \$1,100. This rose to \$2,789 in the 40-44 age group and declined gradually from there to \$2,081 in the 70 or over age group.

U. S. "Gamblingest" Nation in World

New York—Life Magazine, reporting the results of a coast-to-coast survey, says the United States today is "the gamblingest nation that ever existed," with 50,000,000 adults and many minors betting almost \$30,000,000,000 a year.

The annual profit to the book-makers and others on the receiving end is \$8,000,000,000. Life says—or more than the combined profits of U. S. Steel, General Motors, General Electric and the 97 other largest manufacturing companies.

"The reason the joints stay open," the magazine says in its current issue, "is always just one thing: Graft, paid either to the police, the city officials or the political machine, and in some cases all three."

Life says there appears throughout history to be a gambling cycle, repeated over and over again: (1) Unrestricted gambling, leading to (2) outlawing of all gambling, resulting in (3) corruption, followed by (4) gambling, and finally (5) unrestricted gambling all over again.

"We were in the third stage of the cycle until the '30s, when state legislatures began legalizing race tracks right and left," the article says, "and we are now in the fourth stage. Nevada is already in the fifth."

Life estimates the annual profit from gambling houses and from the slot machine business at \$1,000,000,000 each; from the numbers and policy racket \$500,000,000.

THIS WEEK IN WASHINGTON

With congress back in session after a nine-day memorial day vacation, passage of the basing point legislation and the challenge of Maine's Senator Margaret Chase Smith and six other Republicans to join their "declaration of conscience" were the high points of the week.

The basing point legislation, passed by the senate 55 to 27 after the house had approved the measure back on March 14, nullifies a decision of the United States supreme court and permits cement companies, steel, bottle caps, beet sugar and other industries to use a legalized basing point system of a delivered price, freight absorption and price discrimination, in the absence of any conspiracy. In other words, unless there is a conspiracy provided, all companies manufacturing a given product are permitted to fix the same price to the consumer, no matter where or how the goods are actually shipped.

The supreme court held this practice was illegal and a violation of the anti-trust laws. The new laws legalize the practice. Senator Paul Douglas of Illinois led the fight against the bill, declaring it "shot the anti-trust laws with more holes than there are in a large piece of Swiss cheese." He declared it would destroy competition, would discriminate against the south, west, southwest and New England, would create monopoly and that identical bids on public works would encourage corruption "in deciding the winner."

Aiming her remarks at Senator Joseph C. McCarthy and his charges of Communist infestation of the state department, Senator Margaret Chase Smith was joined by Senators Wayne Morse of Oregon, Charles Tobey of New Hampshire, George D. Aiken of Vermont, Irving M. Ives of New York, Edward J. Thye of Minnesota and Robert C. Hendrickson of New Jersey in declaring they were "not proud of the way in which the senate has been made a publicity platform for irresponsible sensationalism." Nor were they proud of "the reckless abandon in which unproved charges have been hurled from this side (Republican) of the aisle; of the obviously staged, undignified countercharges that have been attempted in retaliation from the other side (Democrat) of the aisle; of the way the senate has been made the rendezvous for vilification, for selfish political gain at the sacrifice of individual reputations and national unity"; of the way "we smear outsiders from the floor of the senate and hide behind the cloak of congressional immunity."

After declaring there was a lack of leadership in the Democratic party and that the continued technique was playing into the hands of Communists to "confuse, divide and conquer," and condemning witch-hunts and smears, the statement said:

"It is high time that we stopped thinking politically as Republicans and Democrats about elections and started thinking patriotically as Americans about national security based on individual freedom. It is high time that we all stopped being tools and victims of totalitarian techniques—techniques that if not checked, will surely end what we have come to cherish as the American way of life."

Senator McCarthy, however, unabashed, declared he would continue his charges and technique.

President Truman, in the meantime, again warned the house ways and means committee unless they made up for tax cuts in new revenue, he would be forced to veto the tax bill. To date, the treasury estimated the house committee had written excise slashing cuts amounting to about \$1,275,250,000 into the bill with only about \$412,000,000 of new revenue. The senate banking committee has approved a six-months extension of the rent control law.

There was somewhat general approval, according to observers of the report made by Secretary of State Dean Acheson on the London conference, at an unprecedented question and answer audience in the auditorium of the library of congress. The place was packed with members of both houses of congress.

WALLET MAKES TRIP
Danville, Va. — Eight months ago, Mason Lemon, employed in the crating department of the Kennedy Van-Saun Company, lost his wallet, containing \$1 and some papers. Giving it up for lost, Lemon was surprised to receive a letter from Southampton, England, notifying him that the wallet had been found and was being returned to him. The billfold apparently had dropped into a crate and was shipped overseas to Foster Wheeler, Limited, a Southampton firm.

CAR YOUNG MEN
Chicago, Ill.—When William G. Gibson, 48-year-old salesman, returned from a gray sedan he had left in a parking lot, he saw red fire-engine — Someone, police

could not determine who had applied a paint job to his quarter Ford model, turning it a bright red. It was the job of an apparent expert, too, done with a sprayer, with all the chromium protected with tape.

The State College Extension Service has launched a State-wide program to demonstrate new and remodeled farm homes. Eighteen farm families already have agreed to participate in the program.

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