

Higher Living Standard Reflected In Trend Of Savings As Well As Increase In Spending

Even though much of the national substance has gone for war and defense over the last decade, the United States has given a practical demonstration of the dynamic effect of rising productivity in the way it has continued to lift the living standards of the man in the street.

Over recent years, as the figures show, more Americans than ever before have enjoyed rising incomes, spent more for needs and wants, and saved more in life insurance and in other mediums of thrift. And it should be noted, too, they paid more in taxes to their Governments—Federal, state and local—than in any previous time.

This general advance in living standards for the majority of the people, so much of which is the result of expanded productivity, is apparent even when allowance is made for the growth in population and for the wide rise in prices over the last decade. The adjustment may make the gains less spectacular, but they are nonetheless substantial.

Income Shows Steady Rise

An insight into how this was achieved is provided by an analysis of data compiled by the U. S. Department of Commerce showing the steady upward trend of personal incomes from the beginning of World War II in 1939 to date, and what the people at large did with the increasing funds at their disposal from year to year. The highlights may be summarized as follows:

Total personal income has increased in every year except one out of the last thirteen. The exception was in the brief recession of 1949, but even then the decline was small. The 1952 total of personal income amounted to more than \$268 billions, as against less than \$73 billions in 1939, an increase of nearly fourfold.

Consumer spending has increased in every year since 1939. There have, of course, been variations from year to year, reflecting such factors as the scarcity or abundance of goods, and the impact of changing domestic and international conditions on public psychology and individual buying impulses. Over all, however, the upward trend in personal spending has

been uninterrupted from 1939 to date. Goods and services bought by the people in 1952 exceeded \$216 billions, more than triple the pre-World War II figure.

It is significant to note, in this connection, that spending on hard goods has shown a greater rate of gain since the end of the last war than consumer spending as a whole. This continued to be true even after wartime shortages had been satisfied. Wide ownership of cars, television sets, home labor-saving devices, and other durables standards.

The Trend of Savings

Personal saving has pursued a more zigzag course than either total income or consumer spending. It reached abnormally high levels during the last war, fell for a few years thereafter as goods came into supply, and then moved steadily upward in the last five years. Last year's total of personal savings, as compiled by the Department of Commerce, aggregated \$18 billions, some six and one-half times the 1939 savings figure.

Savings have not only risen greatly in dollar amounts but in distribution of ownership as well. For example, there are 24 million more owners of life insurance today than there were at the beginning of the last war, and the total of insurance in force is about two and one-half times as great. This trend in life insurance, which is paralleled in other savings, indicates the extent that the people have built up their personal protection and "nest eggs" in general to keep pace with their rising living standards.

On the employment front, more than 9½ million persons, or over a sixth of the civilian working population, were jobless in 1939. By contrast, the nation has had full employment in recent years.

As for taxes, they have shown the biggest increase of all. Personal taxes in 1952 added up to a record high of \$34 billions, half as high again as the World War II peak and fourteen times greater than the 1939 total.

Price and Population Factors
It must be recognized, of course,

that the cost of living has nearly doubled in the last thirteen years, and also that the population has increased by approximately one-fifth. However, the gain in average living standards is impressive even when these changes are taken into account.

Taking as an example the trend of consumer spending adjusted to dollars of 1939 buying power, the figures show that total consumer spending in 1952 was more than half again as high as in the pre-World War II year. Making a further adjustment for the population increase, consumer expenditures in 1952 figure out to about \$700 for every man, woman and child in the country last year as against \$515 per capita in 1939.

Thus the real standard of living of the American people has risen by more than a third in the thirteen years from the beginning of World War II to date.

CLASS MEETS

(Left Over From Last Week)
The Mattie Macon Sunday School Class of Bethel Baptist Church met April 1, at 7:30 at the community house with the president, Mrs. Ernest Long, presiding.

The meeting opened with the hymn "The Old Rugged Cross." Miss Eunice Long gave the devotional and of-At the close of prayer a duet "Living For Jesus" was sung by Mrs. Ernest Long and Miss Blanche Goodwin.

Poem by Mrs. Irvin Long. Roll called and minutes were read and business discussed by the class.

Mrs. Dallas Long and Mrs. Wilma Brabble conducted the contest with

Miss Eunice Long and Mrs. William Tarkington winning the prizes.

The meeting closed with hymn "Saviour Like a Shepherd Lead Us." Mrs. Joe White offered prayer. The hostesses, Mrs. Wilma Brabble, Misses Eunice Long and Blanche Goodwin, served refreshments to the following: Mesdames Claude Long, Ernest Long, Thomas Fleetwood, Irvin Long, Bernard Proctor, William Tarkington, Elmer Tarkington, Joe White, Chas. Ward, John Corprew, Jr., and Miss Ruth Mansfield.

BETHEL CLUB MEETS

The Bethel Home Demonstration Club held its regular meeting at the Community House on Friday, April 10, with Mrs. E. J. Proctor and Mrs. W. P. Long as hostesses.

Mrs. Long gave the devotional after which the Lord's Prayer was repeated. New and old business were discussed, with Miss Perry making announcements about the county citizenship skit, the Potato Festival and the county tour on May 7.

It was decided to change the time of meeting to 3:00. Mrs. Charles Ward gave a book report.

Miss Kimsey Perry, Home Agent, gave a most helpful demonstration on "Today's Fabrics," showing samples of different fabrics and their care, and new fabrics on the market today.

Mrs. Dallas Wilkerson conducted an interesting contest with Mrs. Rueben Stallings winning the prize.

The Club Collect was repeated and the meeting adjourned.

Others present were: Mesdames E. L. Goodwin, J. C. Hobbs, W. D. Perry, C. T. Phillips, J. P. Ward, Emmett Long and Miss Blanche Goodwin.

He passed All Right

In the University of Wisconsin, students undergoing an examination in English were asked:

"Write out examples of the indicative, the subjunctive, the potential, and the exclamatory moods."

To which one struggling pupil replied with the following:

"I am endeavoring to pass an English examination. If I answer 20 questions, I shall pass. If I answer 12 questions I may pass. God help me!"

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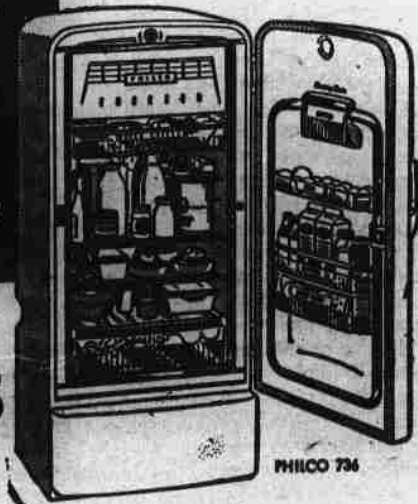
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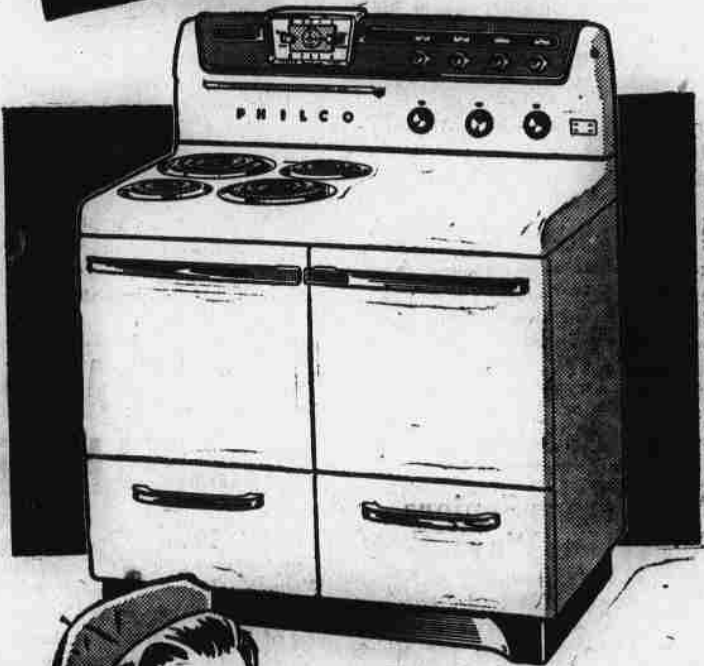


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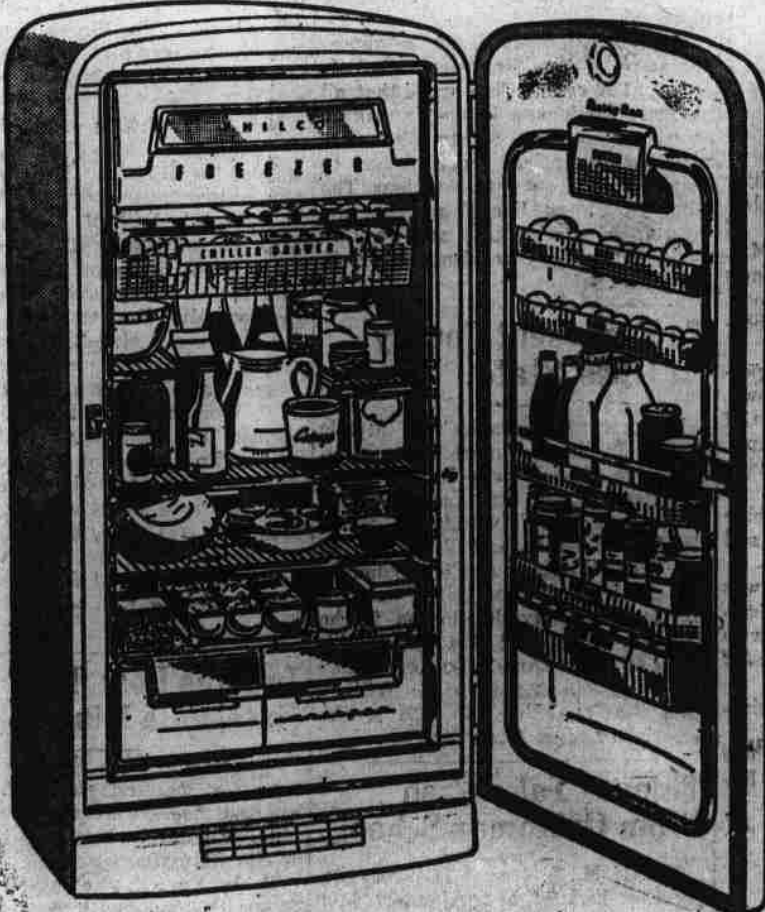
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