

MINIMUM WAGE

FEDERAL EMPLOYEES ASK FOR NEW LAWS.

Washington, October 16.--A systematic drive for legislation to improve the Government service and the working conditions of Government employees is announced by the National Federation of Federal Employees, following a meeting of its legislative committee at national headquarters in the A. F. of L. Building in Washington last night.

First on the list of new measures to be asked for will be a law abolishing statutory salaries and establishing an adjustment board through which to obtain, as for workers in private employ, an equitable relation between salaries and cost of living, and a reclassification of the entire civil service. In line with a resolution adopted at the recent annual convention of the Federation, Congress will be asked to stipulate that the employees shall have representation upon the proposed adjustment board equal to that of the administrative officials.

The Johnson-Nolan bill, providing \$3 per day, or 37½ cents per hour as the minimum wage for Government employees, including Washington school teachers, has already passed the House of Representatives, and early action in the Senate is sought by the Federation. The McKellar-Keating retirement bill establishing an old-age insurance system for federal workers, is expected to come to vote in the Senate within a few days, with excellent chance of passage. These two measures, which in some form have been before Congress for years, are regarded by Government employees as vital remedies for existing defects in the civil service, as well as in the Government's attitude toward its workers. Notwithstanding the increase in living costs, thousands of Government employees are still receiving wages as low as \$55 and \$60 per month, while the lack of a retirement plan has forced upon the Government a virtual pension list of 8000 aged employees who have passed the period of their usefulness.

In order to focus public attention upon the conditions and needs of the federal civil service, the legislative committee of the employees organization according to the national president and chairman, Lutner C. Steward, proposes to set up a coordinated system of legislative committees throughout the country. Each of the 105 local unions in the various states will be called upon to establish a ~~committee~~ ^{committee} auxiliary to the national legislative committee, and to put organized effort behind the legislative program. The national committee will meet every week at the Washington headquarters, and will maintain a close and quick intelligence service with the field.