EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN IN JANUARY 1947

The number of women in the labor force in January was about half a million less than in December. At the January level the women labor force was lower than at any time since the end of the war. There were fewer women working in both agricultural and nonagricultural industries in January than in December, while the number looking for work was practically unchanged.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population (14 years and over)</th>
<th>Number of women</th>
<th>Change since December 1946</th>
<th>Total persons</th>
<th>Percent women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>15,480,000</td>
<td>-30,000</td>
<td>55,390,000</td>
<td>27.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>15,480,000</td>
<td>-30,000</td>
<td>55,390,000</td>
<td>27.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armed forces</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>1,720,000</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonworkers</td>
<td>38,230,000</td>
<td>+540,000</td>
<td>47,460,000</td>
<td>80.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STATE LEGISLATION

Forty-four State legislatures are now in session. In a number of States bills have been introduced which, if passed, will undermine existing working conditions standards for women.

In Pennsylvania, a bill would increase the maximum weekly hours from 44 to 48, the maximum daily hours from 8 to 10, and the maximum workweek from 5½ to 6 days; third-shift work in manufacturing would be permitted under permit. In Indiana, suspension of the night-work law would be extended to March 1949. In Massachusetts, a bill would permit women in manufacturing to work until 11 p.m. instead of 10 p.m.; prohibit employment of boys under 16 (formerly under 18) and girls under 21 between 11 p.m. to 6 a.m.; reduce lunch period for women and minors from 45 to 30 minutes; and permit the Commissioner, after hearings, to suspend until July 1949 enforcement of any law or ruling that regulates, limits, or prohibits the employment of women and minors.

More favorable legislation introduced includes: New Hampshire, an equal-pay bill; New York State, extension to additional establishments of the 48-hour maximum workweek; Minnesota, a 30-minute meal and 10-minute rest period bill; Maryland, a minimum-wage bill applicable to both men and women; Tennessee, a bill reducing maximum hours from 57 to 48 a week, and from 10½ to 10 a day.
MINIMUM WAGE

New York - Three wage boards were recently sworn in to revise minimum wages set in 1938 and 1939 in confectionery, beauty service, and cleaning and dyeing industries. Three other boards - for hotels, restaurants, and laundries (set up late in 1946) - are now holding hearings to raise rates set in 1938 and 1940.

Connecticut - The highest guaranteed weekly wage in any industry - $28 - becomes applicable March 3 to 3-year operators in beauty parlors. Operators with less experience and clerks receive $25 and $23; maids receive $22 for a week of 32-1/4 hours. Overtime rates of 75 cents to 95 cents are provided after 44 hours. The order is applicable to men and women.

ELIMINATION OF WAGE INEQUITIES IN STEEL

Wage adjustments recently made under the terms of a 1945 collective bargaining agreement between the U. S. Steel Corporation and the United Steeworkers of America, CIO, are of significance to women in other industries as well as to "women in steel" who have been directly affected by the existence of long-standing wage rate inequalities. A joint union-management committee worked for two years, establishing 30 job classifications into which were fitted some 45,000 to 50,000 job titles. Procedures were agreed on for working out the new wage rate plan with respect to (1) description of jobs, (2) job classifications and reducing them to the smallest practical number, and (3) establishing wage rates for the job classifications. The plan will be adapted, also, to 84 other steel firms. Bureau of Labor Statistics data show 139,800 women employed in iron and steel in September 1946, or 9.6 percent of the work force.

PRACTICES UNFAVORABLE TO WOMEN

Department Stores - Entry wages for women in most department stores are lower than for men. In 81 percent of 413 reporting stores (none in New York City were included) men's beginning wages are between $20 and $35 a week, while in 74 percent of the stores, women begin at $18 to $30. Less than 3 percent of the stores pay beginning wages of $15 to $18 per week to men, but over 9 percent pay these wages to women. Men are paid $30 or more to start in 30 percent of the stores, but women are paid that much in only 3 percent of the stores. Since women constitute nearly three-fourths of department store employment, their wage rates are more nearly representative of the industry.

Married Women - International Business Machine Corporation, reverting to a prewar policy of not employing married women whose husbands are gainfully employed, dismissed all married women employees February 15. The dismissal policy is Nation-wide.

Union Seniority - The president of Fisher Local 650 charges the Reo Motor Company (Lansing, Mich.) with hiring new employees in preference to taking back some 500 or 600 women with seniority. He says this is in violation of the union contract.
WOMEN IN THE UNITED STATES

Miss Katharine F. Lenroot, Chief, U. S. Children's Bureau, Federal Security Agency, has been named United States member of the executive board of the International Children's Emergency Fund, established by the General Assembly of the United Nations in December 1946. The Fund will provide a supplementary diet to children and nursing mothers in war-devastated countries.

Miss Frieda S. Miller, Director of the Women's Bureau, is the United States Substitute Delegate to the Governing Body of the International Labor Organization meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, in March.

Miss Martha J. Ziegler, Women's Bureau regional representative in the Chicago area, made an official visit to Puerto Rico in February. Young women from Puerto Rico have recently been brought to continental United States by private employment agencies to work as household employees; the purpose of Miss Ziegler's visit was to consult with insular labor department and other government officials about problems that have arisen.

At the request of the War Department, Miss Margaret K. Anderson, Women's Bureau regional representative for the Pacific Coast area will go to Japan for two months to advise on employment and general problems of Japanese women. She will leave the United States in March.

WOMEN IN THE UNITED NATIONS

The UN Commission on the Status of Women meeting (February 10-25 at Lake Success, N. Y.) for the first time as a full commission, elected Mrs. Bodil Begtrup of Denmark, chairman; Mrs. Jessie M. G. Street of Australia, vice-chairman; Mrs. Evdokia Uralova of White Russia, rapporteur. Mrs. Begtrup was chairman of last year's subcommission on the status of women. Mrs. Rachel Mason, regional supervisor of the Women's Bureau, is serving as an adviser to Miss Dorothy Kenyon, United States representative on the commission.

Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt is chairman of the UN Commission on Human Rights, not a member of the Economic and Social Council, as was stated in the January issue of this publication.

WOMEN AROUND THE WORLD

Australia - The Federal Parliament now includes four women members - two in the House of Representatives and two in the Senate.

Union of South Africa - First woman mayor of Johannesburg is Mrs. Jessie McPherson. She is a former member of Parliament and is active in the South African Trades and Labour Council.

Venezuela - In the elections of October 1946, the first in which women had voted, twelve women were elected to the Constituent Assembly. Among them were Dr. Panchita Soublette, a lawyer, and Senorita Ana Luisa Llovera who holds an important post in the Executive Offices of Venezuela.
WOMEN IN BRITAIN

Equal Pay - More than 3,000 women representing 75 organizations unanimously voted to renew their fight for "equal pay for equal work." The resolution, sent to Prime Minister Atlee, "expressed indignation at the long delay in establishing this principle and calls on the government to give a lead by implementing the policy of equal pay for equal work in all Government and public employment now."

At the Seventy-eighth Annual Trade Union Congress in October 1946 a resolution was adopted expressing dissatisfaction with discriminatory practices against women workers. The Congress asked the General Council to use its resources to secure for women clerical workers equal opportunities and equal pay. It also denounced the continuation by banks, insurance companies, and other concerns of the ban against employment of married women.

WOMEN AS HEADS OF FAMILIES

Women heads of families in February 1946 numbered 6.6 million, of whom 1 million were single, 4.3 million widowed and divorced, and 1 million married with husband absent from the household, according to a Census Bureau release. Of this total, 2,560,000 women constituted 1-person families. The proportion of families with a woman head declined from 21.9 percent in May 1945 (V-E Day) to 17.4 percent in February 1946; the percentage was 15.3 in 1940.

The number of women heads under 35 years of age was 1,220,000 in February 1946, 600,000 above 1940. In 1945, when numbers in the armed forces reached a maximum, women heads under 35 were 1,600,000 above 1940. The proportion of women heads in this age group was 18.4 percent in 1946, compared with 27.3 percent in 1945, and 11.6 percent in 1940.

INDUSTRIAL INJURIES TO WOMEN

Between July 1, 1944, and June 30, 1946, nearly 66,000 workmen's compensation cases (opened January 1942 or later) were closed in Michigan. Of these, nearly 8,500, or 13 percent, involved industrial injuries to women. The injuries of 16 women resulted in death and of 513 caused some permanent disability. More than two-thirds of women's injuries occurred in manufacturing, with by far the largest numbers in the automobile, the iron and steel, and the machinery industries.

(Michigan Department of Labor and Industry.)

WILL ECONOMIC DOORS OPENED TO BRITISH WOMEN IN WAR BE CLOSED IN PEACE? - Ethel M. Johnson in Journal of the AAUW, Winter 1947.

