

Over the Editor's Desk

WHITE COLLAR WORKERS

Because "white collar" workers have been slow to organize, their weekly earnings are among the lowest of all groups. The senate sub-committee on Wartime Health and Education has recently issued the report of its investigation on "White Collar and Fixed Income Groups in the War Economy." It finds that some 20,000,000 white collar workers, including those in offices, retail and wholesale stores, insurance, service industries, banks, real estate, government employees (state and local), nurses, teachers and other technical and professional employees, "have not enjoyed rises in income commensurate with the most conservative estimate of the cost-of-living increase." The subcommittee states also: "We found that before the war a large proportion of these people had substandard or below-subsistence-level incomes. We found that the hardships imposed upon them by the war greatly exceeded those born by other groups. We believe that such inequality of sacrifice is unjust, unnecessary and detrimental to the health, morale and efficiency of a nation at war."

The subcommittee found that \$150 a month for single persons and \$200 a month for married persons is the minimum income which could provide an adequate living, that is, \$35 and \$47 a week respectively. Yet in 1943, a group of 4½ million white collar workers averaged only \$28.69 a week; some 3 million workers in retail trade averaged only \$24.88; 2 million non-school state and local government employees \$28.85; and the estimated average for all public school teachers in the 1943-4 school year was about \$32 per week. The report also notes that "after deductions are made for income taxes, war bonds, social security and company retirement funds, the amount of the

weekly pay check is reduced by about 22 per cent."

Here is a group of 20,000,000 intelligent, well educated citizens who will not be able to enjoy an American standard of living after the war or to have their rightful share of the good things of life unless their salaries are raised. From 1939 to 1943, yearly income of mechanical workers increased 69 per cent, of white collar workers only 29 per cent.

EXCERPTS FROM "MESSAGES OF GREETING" SENT TO THE CIVIL SERVICE ASSEMBLY HELD IN CHICAGO, NOVEMBER 1-2-3

President Franklin D. Roosevelt

"Production by civilian employees in the arsenals and shipyards of the Federal Government has kept pace with its counterpart in private industry. In vital military and production areas throughout the country, I also know, employees of state and local governments have provided many services essential to the prosecution of the war. These are demonstrable facts, and the merit system of personnel administration in Government has helped to make them possible."

Governor Edward J. Thye, Minnesota

"We in Minnesota are proud of our civil service system. Although our Civil Service Department has functioned for only five years, it is already considered an integral and important part of our state administration."

Governor Thomas E. Dewey, New York, the first state to have adopted the merit system for its employees.

"Here in the Empire State we are constantly striving to improve the merit system. We have reason to know that

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