

Over the Editor's Desk

DANGER OF SUBSTANDARD PAY

Substandard living impairs the efficiency of the public service, and substandard wages are largely responsible for the drop in public employment. Labor shortages are acute in many public institutions. In some places police forces have been reduced to such an extent that the public safety is endangered. In psychopathic hospitals, shortage of personnel has forced management to have patients wait on one another. In some welfare institutions, married employees have been warned that if they have children they will lose their positions. In some states that situation in welfare departments is desperate because salaries are far below those offered in war industries and private employment or in the federal service.

Turn-over in public employment has assumed grave proportions. For example, of the 10,500 employees in the state of Minnesota about a year ago, 5,686 left their employment during one year. Of those who left, only 488 went into the army. The rest presumably left to accept higher paying positions elsewhere. In some hospitals the turn-

over in non-professional labor is as high as 60 per cent. With such a turnover no organization can expect to maintain normal efficiency. Personnel turn-over has led not only to a deterioration in the efficiency of the public service, but it is also costly and wasteful and thus injurious both quantitatively and qualitatively. The cost of "breaking in" a new employee is generally estimated to be one-fourth of the first year's salary.

PORTLAND PREPARES EXAMS FOR POSTWAR USE

The preparation of a library of examinations to be used in the postwar era will be the major task of the Portland, Oregon, Civil Service Board during the coming year. The agency estimates that 150 examinations will be given immediately following the cessation of the war.

In preparing the examinations, the agency's technical staff will consult bureau heads and supervisors to become familiar with actual job duties, and examination items will be designed so that the tests will be practical as well as accurate in determining the competence of candidates for any class.

—*Civil Service Assembly News Letter*
September, 1944.

Washington Highway Employees

State of Washington highway employees will receive a wage increase effective September 1. Institutional employees were given an increase effective August 1.

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