

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
WAGE AND HOUR DIVISION
Washington

LEATHER INDUSTRY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS 40¢ MINIMUM WAGE RATE

Members of Industry Committee No. 10 under the Fair Labor Standards Act today voted to recommend a minimum wage rate of 40¢ an hour for the Leather Industry. The recommendation, adopted after a motion to recommend a minimum of 37½¢ had been defeated twenty to three, will be submitted to Colonel Philip B. Fleming, Administrator, Wage and Hour Division, United States Department of Labor.

The recommended minimum wage rate for the Leather Industry Committee is the highest minimum which can be ordered under the Fair Labor Standards Act and is the objective set by Congress in the Act for all American industries engaged in interstate commerce or in the production of goods for interstate commerce.

Should this rate be approved by the Administrator, after a public hearing in which interested parties may appear in support or opposition to the proposed, it would increase the hourly wage rates of approximately 3,000 employees now receiving less than 40¢ an hour. The industry as a whole employs approximately 50,000 workers. The report will be prepared by Monsignor Francis J. Haas, Dean of the School of Social Science, Catholic University of America, Washington, D. C., a public member of the Committee, who was designated by the Administrator to serve as Chairman.

The chief branch of the Leather Industry is tanning, currying and finishing, with approximately 48,000 workers.

All members of the Committee attended the three-day sessions with the exception of Prof. Thomas L. Norton of the University of Buffalo, Buffalo, New York, who was unable to be present.

The Committee opened its session on Monday, April 8, in the Hearing Room of the Wage and Hour Division at Tenth and D Streets, Northwest, Washington, D. C.

The twenty-four members of the Committee were equally representative of the public, the employers and the employees. These Committee members came from twelve states; namely, District of Columbia, Michigan, Ohio, Maryland, Massachusetts, New York, Virginia, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, North Carolina, Minnesota and Delaware, where the leather industry is centered.

The definition of the industry as expressed in the Administrator's Order appointing the Committee is:

- "(a) The manufacture of leather (including rawhide) from any type of hide or skin; the currying and finishing of leather and
- (b) The manufacture of welting and power transmission belting when made wholly or principally of leather."

Tables offered at the sessions of the Leather Industry Committee listed the number of workers in the seven divisions of the tanning, currying and finishing branch of the industry and the figures on employees in each of these divisions receiving less than 40 cents an hour. These figures follow:

| <u>Division</u> | <u>Total Employees</u> | <u>Employees Paid Less Than 40 Cents</u> |
|-------------------|------------------------|--|
| Soles and Belting | 9,579 | 519 |
| Side Uppers | 15,610 | 617 |
| Calf Uppers | 3,775 | 38 |
| Kid Uppers | 6,170 | 615 |
| Glove Leather | 1,220 | 28 |
| Other Sheepskin | 5,569 | 307 |
| Other Leather | 5,750 | 463 |
| Totals | 47,673 | 2,587 |

The "breakdown" of these 47,673 employees in the tanning, currying and finishing branch by areas follows:

| | | |
|----------------------|--------|-------|
| New England Area | 11,099 | 499 |
| Middle Atlantic Area | 15,802 | 406 |
| Middle Western Area | 15,276 | 461 |
| Southern Area | 5,496 | 1,221 |
| Totals | 47,673 | 2,587 |

These figures were contained in reports furnished to the members of the committee by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Research and Statistics Branch of the Wage and Hour Division.

###