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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
Wage and Hour Division
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Completion of the program to set a 40 cent minimum wage for all 21 million workers under the Wage-Hour Act was announced today by L. Metcalfe Walling, Administrator, with publication of the final two wage orders, effective July 17, 1944, for 2 million men and women, approximately 110,000 of whom have been receiving less than 40 cents an hour.

"Although 40 cents an hour may seem low in these war-boom times, restitution of illegally withheld wages for the current year will exceed \$17,000,000 and more than one quarter of the cases involve failure to pay the minimum wage," Mr. Walling said in announcing the new wage orders.

The new wage orders cover 1,250,000 men and women in the Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, Motion Picture and Miscellaneous Industries, with direct wage increases going to an estimated 60,000, and 900,000 workers in the Communication, Utilities and Miscellaneous Transportation Industries, with direct wage increases for about 50,000.

Congress set October 24, 1945 as the date when a 40 cent minimum would automatically go into effect for all covered workers and provided an industry committee machinery whereby the minimum was to be raised from 30 to 40 cents industry by industry, as rapidly as possible in view of economic and competitive conditions and without substantially curtailing employment. The recommendations of these committees equally representative of employers, labor and the public, have thus advanced by more than a year the statutory deadline for a universal 40 cent minimum.

The 69 Industry Committees, whose recommendations led to the universal 40 cent minimum; made 113 different wage rate recommendations over a $5\frac{1}{2}$ year period. Although all 113 recommendations were for raising the rates, more than half these were reached by unanimous vote. In 85 percent of the cases a majority of the employer members concurred in the recommended rate or split evenly.

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