

**INSIDE THIS ISSUE:
WOMEN IN THE WORKFORCE**

FAMILIES AT WORK

April 1985

ECONOMIC NOTES

LABOR RESEARCH ASSOCIATION, INC.
80 EAST 11th STREET, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10003

Vol. 53, No. 4

Editor: Gregory Tarpinian

\$1 a copy

Working-Class Families

Rock-a-bye baby, in the tree top,
When you grow up, you'll work in a shop,
When you get married, your wife will work too,
Just so the rich will have nothing to do.
Picketline song, Bridgeport, Ct., 1933

The Conference Board, a private industry-sponsored research institute, recently released a study which found that more U.S. families have reached middle-class income levels than ever before. "Only 20 years ago," the study reports, "fewer than 13 million families (or roughly 28%) had earnings in excess of \$25,000 a year, in today's prices; currently that bracket includes 29 million (or over 40% of all families)." Similar studies have been used by the Reagan administration to buttress claims that "prosperity" abounds and the American standard of living continues to rise.

But the "prosperity" of a growing number of American families is based on more and more hours spent at work by two or more earners in each family, not on higher wages. Over the same period covered by the Conference Board study, average real weekly wages fell from \$184.74 to \$179.27. Real weekly wages declined by one full percentage point from February 1984 to February 1985. Gone are the days when a single wage earner could provide basic necessities for an entire family. Today's single-earner families have median annual earnings of \$16,900 — far below the \$25,000 middle-income level threshold (median means that half of all families have earnings below this point and half have earnings above). After-tax income for most single-earner families falls perilously close to the official poverty line, and below the low standard city worker's budget of \$18,300 — a more realistic poverty line based on Department of Labor statistics.

The American working class is by and large made up of working families. Out of a total workforce of 115 million, over 85 million workers — 75% of the total — live in families. And of these, 65 million — or 76% — live in families where at least one other person is employed. This issue of *Economic Notes* analyzes the current situation of the American working class by examining the situation of the families that comprise it.

Families at Work — Men and Women

American families are families at work. Of the 62 million families in the U.S., over 46 million or 75% have at least one wage or salary earner. Eighty per-

(continued on page 2)

CONTENTS

FOCUS: FAMILIES

AT WORK 1-12

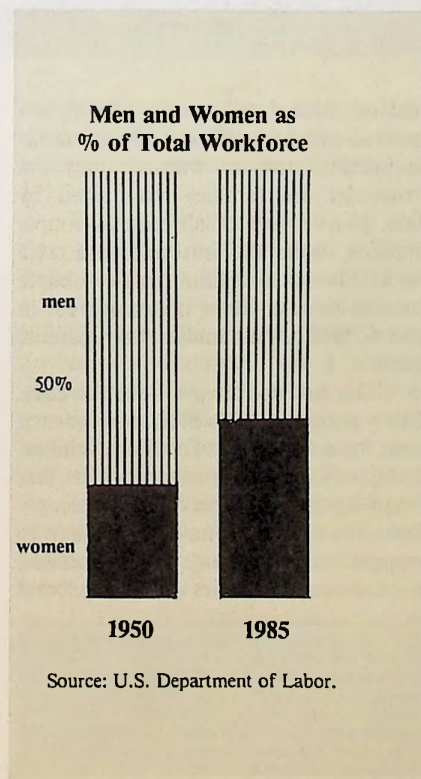
- *Working-Class Families* . . . 1-5
- *Women in the Workforce* . 6-9
- *Union Men and Women* 10-12

INTERNATIONAL LABOR .13

Maternity Benefits Abroad

ECONOMIC CLIPS 14-15

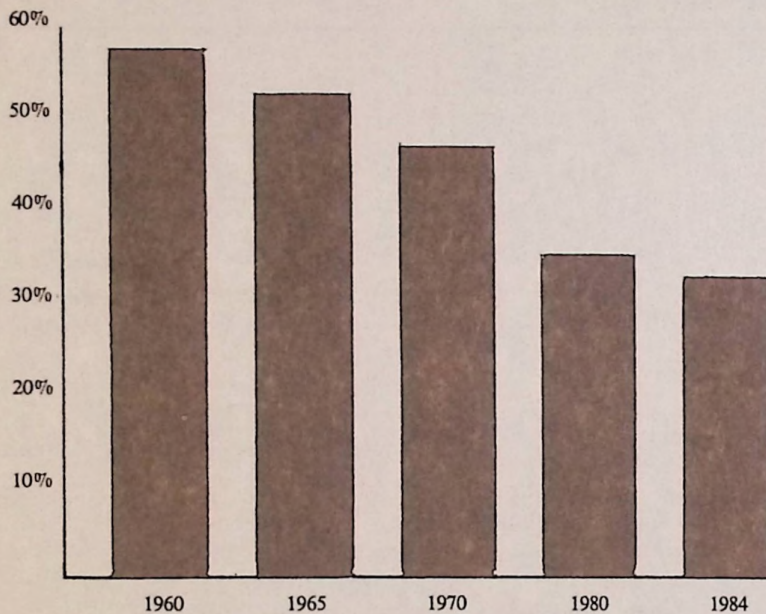
FACTS AND FIGURES 16



Working-Class Families

(continued from page 1)

Graph 1. Married Men As Sole Providers, 1960-1984
(% of all married men)



Source: U.S. Department of Labor.

cent of these families with earners are married-couple families; 14% are families maintained by women, and the remainder are families maintained by men. In over half of all married-couple families, both the husband and wife work. Almost 25 million married-couple families have children under age 18; in over 60% of these families, both parents work.

This has not always been the case. Thirty years ago, 60% of all married men were the sole support for their families. Today, only 32% are sole providers (see Graph 1). Sole providers are increasingly limited to those who have no children to support. As a percent of all families, married-couple families with the husband

acting as sole provider now account for only 26% of the total (see Table 1).

The enormous increase in the number of families with more than one earner

has come from the radical rise in the number of women in the workforce. Due primarily to the increase in voluntary and involuntary early retirements, the labor force participation rate for men — the proportion of the male population that is in the labor force — actually declined from 88% in 1950 to 78.3% in 1984. The participation rate for women increased from 33.2% to 53.9% over the same period (see Graph 2).

The greatest increase has occurred among married women with children under the age of 18. Children were once a reason to stay home — a disincentive to work. In 1950, married women with children under 18 had lower labor force participation rates than married women with no children at home. Today, 47.1% of all married women with no children at home are in the labor force. Of all married women with children under 18, 58.8% work. In fact, the greatest increase in labor force participation rates has occurred among women with children under the age of six. Their participation rate has increased from just 11.9% in 1950 to 47.8% today.

Additional Income Necessary

In addition to both husbands and wives working, many husbands or wives work two jobs. Five million wage earners

(continued on page 3)

Table 1
Median Annual Earnings for Families
With Wage and Salary Earners, 1984

	Number of families (millions)	% of all families	Median annual earnings
Married couple families			
Only husband works	10.8	26.2%	\$21,476
Only wife works	2.1	5.1	10,712
Husband and wife work	13.3	32.1	33,904
Husband, wife, and other family member(s) work	3.2	7.9	47,736
Husband and other family member(s) work	2.3	5.7	36,452
Families maintained by women	6.4	15.4	14,976
Families maintained by men	1.7	4.2	20,852

Source: U.S. Department of Labor.

ECONOMIC NOTES (ISSN 0013-0184) is published monthly except combined July/August for individuals for one year \$10 (\$13 foreign), organizations \$15 (\$18 foreign); for two years \$18 (\$24 foreign), organizations \$25 (foreign \$33); by Labor Research Association, a tax-exempt association, 80 E. 11 St., Room 634, New York, N.Y. 10003. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Economic Notes*, 80 E. 11 St., Room 634, New York, N.Y. 10003.

Working-Class Families

(continued from page 2)

now work two or more jobs. The number of women who work two or more jobs has more than tripled over the last two decades. Married workers are more likely than single workers to hold down two jobs at once — yet another reflection of the financial pressures that confront today's working families.

Moreover, many families are now supported by working parents and working children. Since 1950, there has been a steady increase in the number of 14–17-year-olds who hold jobs while still attending school. Over four million high school students — one out of every four — are in the labor force. Almost one million of these are 14 or 15 years old. These figures do not reflect the vast number of children who work at odd jobs “off the books” in order to increase family income.

In sum, the American family now spends more hours at work than it did thirty years ago. The family once supported by a single wage earner's 40-hour workweek is now commonly maintained by two earners, who in most cases work 40 hours a week each, or more.

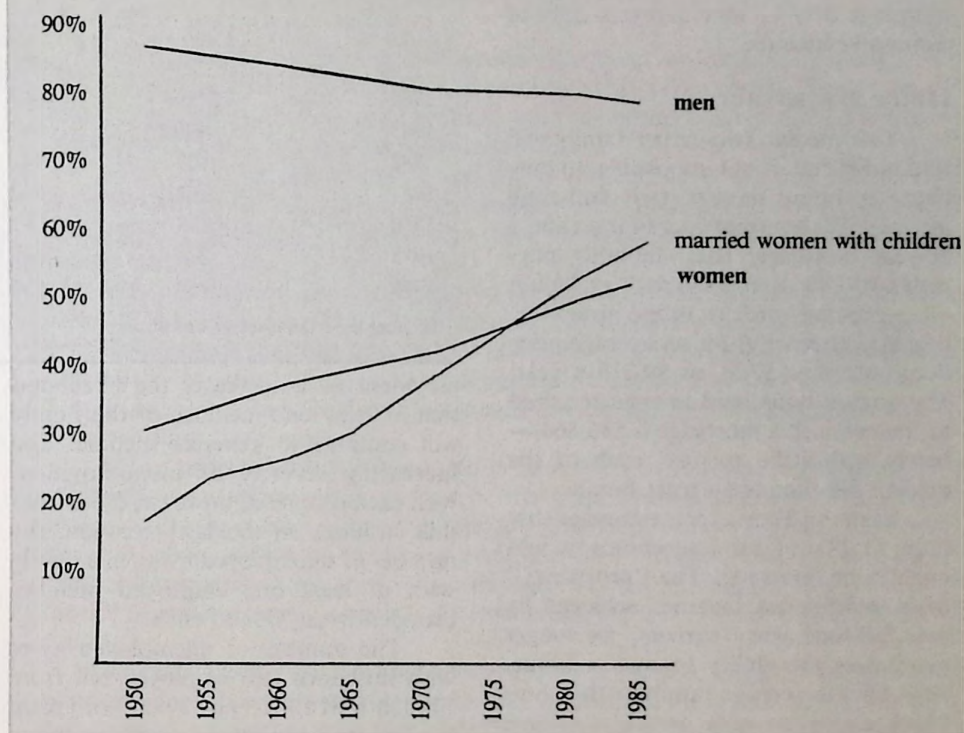
Consequently, family income has increased despite the decline in average real wages and the long-term trend towards increased unemployment. “Middle-class” income levels are a reality for a larger number of families, but only on the basis of two or more workers per family. The price paid for “prosperity” is high, and the great increase in the number of hours worked by each family unit is not fully rewarded by a proportionate increase in the family's standard of living.

The median annual wage for a married man who works full-time is \$22,828. If his wife takes a full-time job, her median annual wage of \$14,196 will push family income into the middle-class range. But as the average length of the workweek tends to increase over the years, real family earnings per hour decline.

Two-Earner Families

For the two-earner family where both husband and wife work full-time, real weekly earnings have remained vir-

Graph 2. Labor Force Participation Rates, 1950–1985



Source: U.S. Department of Labor

tually stagnant since 1970 (see Table 2). Over the same period, the average workweek for both male and female full-time workers has increased, with the workweek for women increasing at a faster pace. The longer hours have produced only negligible gains in real weekly earnings as real per hour compensation has actually declined.

The average workweek for full-time male workers is now 44.4 hours per week. Married men work longer hours than any other group in the labor force, with an average workweek of 44.8 hours. Full-time female workers average 40.8 hours per week, up by almost one full hour since 1970. Married women now average 40.5 hours per week.

The average two-earner family with husband and wife employed full-time spends 85.3 hours per week at work in return for \$712 or \$37,024 in median annual earnings. Approximately \$28,139 will remain after average federal, state,

and local taxes are paid. For the three million black families with two or more earners, the median annual income is \$31,564.

With both parents working full-time, child-care costs are added to family expenses. And with housing costs now consuming 35% of gross income, \$12,958 goes for shelter. The federal government estimates that a married couple with two school-age children spends over \$100 per week on food, based on a “moderate cost” food plan, with all meals taken at home. That leaves less than \$10,000 a year to cover all other family expenses, including child care, health care, transportation, clothing, and other necessities.

It is hardly surprising that 12% of all families have no money in the bank, and 40% have less than \$1,000 in their savings and checking accounts. The median for all families is \$2,300 — an insufficient

(continued on page 4)

Working-Class Families

(continued from page 3)

amount for major purchases or family emergencies. Over the last decade, family savings have declined, while consumer debt has skyrocketed. Outstanding consumer debt — which does not include mortgage debt — now averages 22% of disposable income.

Home Ownership

This median two-earner family will find it difficult, if not impossible, to purchase a home despite two full-time incomes. With current interest rates and a 30-year mortgage, basic monthly payments (principal and interest, excluding other expenses such as taxes, insurance, heat and electricity) for an average price house are now \$768, or \$9,216 a year. The annual household income required to finance such a mortgage is \$36,864 — barely within the pre-tax reach of the median full-time two-earner family.

Salomon Bros., Inc., estimates that only 21.7% of all households would qualify for financing. The “prosperity” of a middle-class income, achieved by two full-time wage earners, no longer guarantees the ability to own a home. And for the average family with a husband acting as sole provider, home ownership is out of the question. It is also out of reach for two large groups of families who do not participate in the relative “prosperity” achieved by two-earner families: families with unemployed members and families maintained by women.

Unemployment

According to official counts, which vastly underestimate the actual number of unemployed, over four million families had at least one member out of work in 1984. Over 78% of these families were married-couple families. In just over one-fourth of these families, the husband was unemployed. In most of these cases, the wife was the sole remaining earner, and the median family income was reduced to \$206 per week, or \$10,712 per year. In cases where the wife was unemployed and the husband was the sole remaining earner, family income was reduced to \$374 per week.

The trend towards two-earner families expands the cushion against unem-

	Husbands		Wives	
	Current Dollars	1967 Constant Dollars	Current Dollars	1967 Constant Dollars
1984	\$439	\$140	\$273	\$87
1983	408	137	255	86
1982	407	141	246	85
1981	382	140	229	84
1980	348	141	208	85
1975	234	145	139	86
1970	159	137	95	82

Source: U.S. Department of Labor.

ployment as it increases the likelihood that at least one member of the family will continue to generate income. The increasing severity of unemployment with each recession, however, diminishes this cushion. In the last recession, the number of unemployed living in a family with at least one employed member dropped from 70% to 66%.

The number of unemployed wives with husbands still employed fell from 87% in 1981 to 75% by 1982. With plant closings now a major cause of unemployment, and whole communities left jobless, unemployment sweeps through families to a greater extent than it did in the past.

Families Maintained by Women

Almost 10 million U.S. families are maintained by women — 15% of all families compared to 10% 30 years ago. Only 6.4 million of these families have employed wage earners. In most cases, these families include children under age 18, and the women wage-earner works full-time and is the sole provider. The median annual earnings for these families are \$12,688. Almost 36% of all black families with wage earners are maintained by women, with a median family income of \$12,532.

The unemployment rate for women who maintain families — currently 11% — is higher than the rate for any other group of women. And these women are far less likely to have another employed

person in the family. Only 16.8% of all unemployed women who maintain families have an employed member in the household; 83% of these women have children to support. In 1984, over one-third of all families maintained by women fell below the poverty line; the figure was still 25% even when the mother worked. These working families represent part of what has come to be

(continued on page 5)

BLS Sources

The statistical information in this issue is based on the extensive data provided by the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics and the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of the Census, including various volumes and issues of *Employment and Earnings*, *Monthly Labor Review*, the *BLS News Service*, *Labor Force Statistics Derived From the Current Population Survey*, and *Statistical Abstract of the U.S.* The Reagan Administration recently announced, however, that the budgets for information-gathering by these agencies will be slashed. The already difficult task of assessing the situation of the working class will be made even more difficult as a result of Reagan's policies.

Working-Class Families

(continued from page 4)

known as the "working poor."

"Discretionary" Income

The Conference Board, with its study of the growing number of middle-class families, concludes that "women have clearly helped boost discretionary income." But there is little "discretionary" income in a family after-tax budget of \$28,139. The "prosperity" of the post-recession Reagan years is a prosperity based on ever-greater amounts of labor time sacrificed by each working-class family, with ever-diminishing returns.

One of the most significant long-term trends in the U.S. economy is the gradual but steady rise in the portion of the total population that labors for a living. Since 1950, the labor force participation rate for the population as a whole has climbed by more than five full percentage points, from 59.2% to 64.4% in 1984. The current rate is one of the highest in the industrialized capitalist countries.

This increase in the percentage of working Americans should be reflected in a significantly higher standard of living for the working class. Instead, the standard of living, measured through various indicators, has remained stagnant for a large number of families and declined for others. For those families who have increased their standard of living, the extent of the increase falls short of the additional labor time invested.

The U.S. economy constantly demands a larger pool of workers to fuel its growth. Immigrant laborers and freed slaves supplied this pool in the early part of the century; women have been the chief source in the post-war period. But the rewards that should come from the ever-greater number of hours spent in the workplace by laboring Americans have not fallen fully into the pockets of those who work. For every worker who joins the labor force, the mass of profits expands, and as wages are driven down, the rate of profit grows. As lower real wages force more family members into the workplace, for more hours of labor not fully rewarded, the challenge to today's trade unions becomes ever more clear. □

Working-Class Children

With the radical increase in the number of two-earner families, the need for comprehensive quality child care has reached crisis proportions. Almost ten million children under the age of six have working mothers. Seven million live in families where both the mother and father work.

Another 15 million children age six to thirteen have working mothers. Almost ten million of these live in families where both parents work. Seven million are "latch-key" children who have no adult supervision during after-school hours.

Very little is known about the various arrangements working parents make to care for their children. The total inadequacy of maternity and paternity leave provisions means that working parents confront child care problems soon after childbirth. One-third of all women who give birth are back at work before their baby is six months old. Quality infant care is in short supply and too expensive for most working-class families.

Many parents work different shifts to solve the problem of child care. According to a 1982 government report — the latest study available — 17% of all married working mothers leave their children with their fathers — a reflection of the shift-work solution to child care. Nine percent of working mothers care for their children while they work. Most of these women are employed in "home work" of various types — commonly low-paying clerical or piece-rate assembly jobs.

A small number of working parents with pre-school children use group child-care facilities. Nursery school enrollments doubled during the 1970's, but a large part of the increase came from families above the median income level. Most of the facilities are private profit-making operations, and beyond the reach of the working class. Federal funding for public child care has been slashed under the Reagan Administration.

Almost one-third of working parents rely on relatives for child care. Another 30% rely on informal, unregulated care by non-relatives, usually in the care-provider's home. In both cases, the quality of care varies widely, and the cost is a burden.

Only 1,000 employers — a fraction of the total — provide child-care facilities for their employees. A recent survey of private-sector employers found only one case where child care is provided with funds secured under a collective bargaining agreement.

Child-care costs represent a major expense for working-class families. The federal child-care tax credit has little or no value for those below median income levels. Increasingly, families are caught in an economic bind: both parents must work to support the family, but child care is prohibitively expensive. A 1982 census survey of women who are not in the labor force found that almost one-third of the women with family incomes under \$25,000 would look for work if child care was available at a reasonable cost.

As more and more families are forced to send two full-time earners into the workplace, the need for child care will escalate. Comprehensive quality public child care, provided by child care workers who are paid decent wages, must be a priority political goal for the labor movement. □

FAMILIES

Women in the Workforce

The single most significant change in the composition of the U.S. workforce since World War II is the dramatic rise in the number of women workers. Since 1950, the labor force has increased from 62 million to 115 million workers. Almost 30 million of the 53 million new workers — 57% of the total — are women. The overall labor force participation rate for women — the number of women in the labor force as a percent of all women — averaged between 23–25% from 1910 to 1940. It then increased at a fairly constant pace from 31.4% in 1950 to 53.9% in 1984.

Participation Rates

The participation rate for single women increased from 50.5% in 1950 to 63.3% in 1984 — a significant rise, but one that accounts for only 6.9 million of all the women who have entered the workforce. The participation rate for widows and the actual number employed have declined over the years, primarily due to early retirement and improved pension and social security benefits. The participation rate for divorced women — traditionally the highest — has increased slightly to the current rate of 74.3%. Although the number of divorced women has climbed with the soaring divorce rate, divorced women now account for only 11% of the female labor force.

Despite significant growth in the number of women who are divorced or who maintain families — women with obvious economic incentives to work — most of the women in the labor force are married women with husbands present and employed, and with children under the age of 18. The participation rate for married women increased from 23.8% in 1950 to 52.8% in 1984. The number of married women workers rose from 9.3 million in 1950 to 26.9 million in 1984, and accounts for almost 60% of all the women who have entered the workforce in the last 35 years.

Women With Children

The most marked increase has occurred among married women with children (see Table 1). Until 1952, married women with children under age

18 were far less likely to work outside the home than married women with no children under age 18. But in 1953, the participation rate for married women with children ages 6–17 surpassed the rate for women with no children for the first time. It now stands at 65.4%, compared to 47.1% for those with no children. Almost 70% of all married women workers with children at home are employed full-time.

The fastest increase has occurred among married women with children under six years of age. The participation rate for this group rose from 11.9% in 1950 to 47.8% in 1984. There are now 6.2 million married women in the workforce with children under the age of six; 3.6 million of these have children under the age of three. Almost 65% of these women work full-time.

Of the 49 million women now in the workforce, 19.5 million have children under age 18 and eight million have children under age six. The financial expense of having children has become an incentive to work for an ever-greater number of women. As real wages continue to decline and reduce overall family income, the incentive grows.

Increased Participation

Labor force participation rates for older women have remained relatively stable, while the rates for younger women have soared. Consequently, as older working women retire and more young women enter the workforce, overall participation rates will climb.

In 1972, the Department of Labor estimated that female participation rates would reach 43.2% by 1985 — a projection that fell far short of the actual current rate of 53.9%. For 1995, the Department of Labor now projects a participation rate of 60.3%. With family income still threatened by declining real wages, women will continue to enter the workforce in large numbers.

Unemployment

As more women have entered the labor force, unemployment rates have climbed. The unemployment rate for women with small children is higher than the rate for any other group of women. Women with children under the age of three are twice as likely to be unemployed as women with no children.

From 1947, when the government

(continued on page 7)

Table 1
**Labor Force Participation Rates of Married Women,
Husband Present, by Age of Children, 1950–1984**

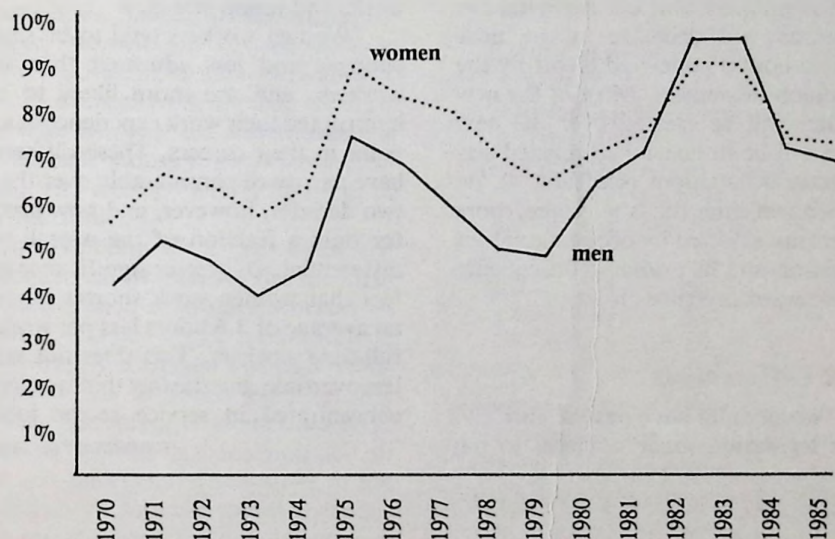
	All married women	With no children under 18 years	With children under 18 years		
			Total	6–17 years, none younger	Under 6 years
1984	52.8	47.1	58.8	65.4	47.8
1980	50.1	46.0	54.1	61.7	45.1
1975	44.4	43.9	44.8	52.3	36.6
1970	40.9	42.1	39.9	49.2	30.5
1965	34.7	38.3	32.2	42.7	23.3
1960	30.5	34.7	27.6	39.0	18.6
1955	27.7	32.7	24.0	34.7	16.2
1950	23.8	30.3	18.4	28.3	11.9

Source: U.S. Department of Labor.

Women in the Workforce

(continued from page 6)

Graph 1. Official Unemployment Rates For Men and Women, 1970-1985



Source: U.S. Department of Labor. 1985 figures are for Jan. and Feb.

first began to record unemployment rates for men and women, until 1982, female unemployment was consistently higher than male unemployment. Throughout the 1970's the female unemployment rate averaged 1.5 percentage points higher than the rate for men. This long-term trend was reversed in the last recession when the male unemployment rate exceeded the female rate for the first time (see Graph 1). With the onset of the recovery, female unemployment rates once again topped male rates, but the new tendency towards a narrower differential will most likely continue.

Because men are more concentrated in industries that are deeply affected by the business cycle, such as manufacturing, mining, and construction, male

unemployment rates rise more quickly than female rates during recessions and then decline during recoveries. But since 1978, the more long-term decline in these industries has boosted male unemployment rates while female rates have remained more stable. As employment in the service sector continues to grow while employment in basic industries declines, the unemployment rates for men and women will become more equal.

Where Women Work

Of the 49 million women currently in the labor force, 42.5 million are employed as wage and salary workers in non-agricultural industries. Of these,

30.5 million are full-time workers. Nine million work part-time for "voluntary" reasons, and three million work part-time for "economic" reasons — because they cannot find full-time work.

Almost eight million women workers are public sector employees. Of the 34.5 million women wage earners in the private sector, 27.7 million work in service industries. According to Department of Labor statistics, the manufacturing sector employs 6.8 million women. But this figure is deceptive since only 3.9 million women in this category are actually involved in the production process. The remainder work in manufacturing concerns as secretaries, clerks, salespeople, and administrators.

Industry breakdowns must be combined with occupational breakdowns in order to gain an accurate picture of where women work and what kind of work they do. Over 30 million women — 70% of all women wage earners — work in the ten industries and occupations outlined in Table 2. U.S. workers remain segregated

(continued on page 8)

Table 2
Industries and Occupations
Of Women Workers, 1984

	Millions of Women Workers
Record and office clerks, bookkeepers, bank tellers	7.2
Secretaries, stenographers, typists	4.8
Retail sales workers	4.5
Food preparation and service	3.2
Elementary and high school teachers and teachers' aids	2.8
Registered and licensed practical nurses	1.8
Building and private household maids	1.6
Nurses' aides and orderlies	1.5
Textile and apparel machine operators	1.1
Childcare workers	1.0

Source: U.S. Department of Labor.

Women in the Workforce

(continued from page 7)

Table 3
Women as % of All Workers
Select Occupations, 1972 and 1984

	1972	1984
Carpenters	.6%	1.3%
Brickmasons	.6	.3
Electricians	.4	1.2
Plumbers, pipefitters	.3	1.1
Auto mechanics	.5	.8
Firefighters	.5	.7
Rail transportation	—	.5
Registered nurses	98.0	96.0
Secretaries	99.2	98.3
Typists	96.2	95.7
Childcare workers	95.8	95.2
Textile sewing machine operatives	94.8	93.2

Source: U.S. Department of Labor.

into "women's jobs" and "men's jobs" (see Table 3).

Occupational sex segregation has been relatively stable for the last century, despite radical changes in the nature of

Table 4
Top Ten Occupations with
Greatest Projected Job Growth,
1982-1995

	number of jobs
Building custodians	779,000
Cashiers	744,000
Secretaries	719,000
Office clerks	696,000
Salesclerks	685,000
Registered nurses	642,000
Waiters and waitresses	562,000
Kindergarten and elementary school teachers	511,000
Truckdrivers	425,000
Nursing aides and orderlies	423,000

Source: U.S. Department of Labor.

production and the composition of the workforce. More than one-third of all wage and salary workers work in jobs where at least 90% of their co-workers are of the same sex. The small decline in occupational sex segregation that has occurred over the last two decades resulted primarily from men entering traditionally female occupations.

It is unlikely that occupational sex segregation will decrease in the near future without a concerted effort by the trade union movement. Most of the new jobs that will be created over the next decade will be in heavily segregated service sector occupations (see Table 4). As more women enter the labor force, more workers are affected by occupational sex segregation and its primary consequence — downward pressure on wages.

Wage Differentials

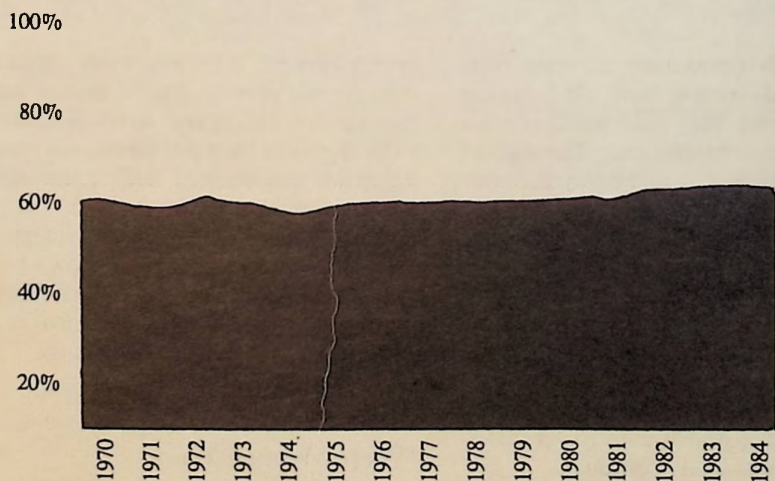
Two decades have passed since civil rights legislation made it illegal to pay

men and women different wages for the same work or to discriminate against women in hiring, job assignments, or promotion. But the differential in wages for men and women remains relatively unchanged (see Graph 2). The wage differential is caused by a number of factors, including age, education, experience, occupation, industry, hours of work, and union status.

Women workers tend to be slightly younger and less educated than male workers, and are more likely to have interrupted their work experience at some point in their careers. These differences have narrowed considerably over the last two decades, however, and now account for only a fraction of the overall wage differential. Of greater significance is the fact that women work shorter hours — an average of 3.6 hours less per week for full-time workers. This does not reflect less overtime, but the fact that women are concentrated in service sector jobs in

(continued on page 9)

Graph 2. Women's Wages as a % of Men's Wages
Median Weekly Earnings for Full-Time Wage and Salary Workers, 1970-1984



Source: U.S. Department of Labor.

Women in the Workforce

(continued from page 8)

which the average length of the work-week is lower.

The most significant factors in the wage differential are the three related factors of occupation, industry, and union status. Within various occupations, there are both high- and low-paying positions, and women are disproportionately represented in the lowest-paying job categories. Among sales workers, for example, women are concentrated in salesclerk positions in the retail industry, and earn average weekly wages of \$216. Male sales workers are concentrated in the wholesale industry as sales representatives, with average weekly earnings of \$403 (see Table 5).

In a ranking of 52 industries, the apparel and textile industry has the highest concentration of women workers — currently 81.3% — but ranks 50th in average hourly earnings. The coal industry ranked first in hourly earnings, but last in the percentage of women workers. Moreover, women are concentrated in the largely unorganized industries of the service sector. Average wages for non-union women are only 75% of average wages for women who are trade union members.

The Rand Corp., a private research firm, calculates that women's wages will reach 74% of male wages by the year 2000. This figure is indicative of the number of women who will still be trapped in low-paying jobs. Lower wages for any group of workers — male, female, black, white, service sector, manufacturing sector — drive down wages for the working class as a whole. The current male-female wage differential means a \$9,000 loss per year for the two-earner family with husband and wife working full-time.

The high unemployment and turnover rates for women workers reflect the fact that they are still a more dispensable part of the workforce — a pool of laborers who can be drawn into the workforce or pushed away as the needs of employers shift and change. The 16 million women under the age of 60 who are not in the labor force because of "home responsibilities" remain an untapped supply of cheap labor. Continued wage inequality

Table 5
Median Weekly Earnings by Occupation
Full-Time Wage and Salary Workers, 1984

Occupation	Men		Women		(as % of male wages)
	No. of workers (in millions)	Median weekly wage	No. of workers (in millions)	Median weekly wage	
Executive, managerial, administrative	5.7	\$558	3.3	\$363	65%
Professionals (includes teachers, registered nurses)	5.0	544	4.4	392	72
Technicians and related support (includes licensed practical nurses, health technicians)	1.5	455	1.3	307	67
Sales occupations	4.2	403	2.8	216	54
Administrative support and clerical (includes record clerks, secretaries)	3.0	380	10.4	255	67
Service occupations	4.0	256	4.1	177	69
Mechanics, repair workers	3.7	399	.08	366	92
Construction trades	3.4	382	.05	—	—
Other precision production	3.1	405	.8	244	60
Machine operators	4.4	340	2.7	208	61
Transportation (includes truck drivers, railroad workers, industrial equipment operators)	3.6	361	.2	249	69
Handlers, helpers, laborers	3.1	252	.6	212	84
Farming, forestry, fishing	1.4	203	.2	167	82

Source: U.S. Department of Labor.

will exert downward pressure on wages for all workers as more and more women are forced into the workplace by financial pressures.

Responses

Comparable worth legislation currently under consideration would require that wage structures are justified by "job evaluations." Different jobs would be evaluated on a point basis according to the levels of skill, responsibility, and effort required, and the working conditions entailed. The scores would then be compared to determine wage structures.

Comparable worth is one tactic for raising wages. It will not, however, eliminate wage differentials between firms in the same industry, or between industries. The fight against wage differentials between firms and industries will require massive trade union organizing campaigns and hard bargaining, particularly in the service sector. □

CLUW Focus

The Coalition of Labor Union Women has launched a year-long focus on work and the family, which will include a legislative conference on family and work issues in May. Trade unionists interested in the conference or in joining CLUW can contact the National CLUW Office at 15 Union Square, N.Y., N.Y. 10003.

FAMILIES

Union Men and Women

The U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) has not collected information on total union membership, including union members who are unemployed, laid off, or retired, since 1980. The latest membership figures are limited to employed wage and salary workers who are union members. Union membership for employed workers has dropped from 20.1 million in 1980 to 17.4 million in 1984 — a loss of 2.7 million members, despite the fact that the total number of employed wage and salary workers grew by 3.7 million in the same period. Trade union members now account for only 18.8% of all employed wage and salary workers.

Economic Factors

The 1980–84 decline in trade union membership is clearly linked to fundamental shifts in the economy and Reagan Administration policies. During this period, the number of jobs held by union members in the mining, construction, and manufacturing industries fell by 1.9 million, while the number of jobs held by

	All workers (millions)	Union members (millions)	% unionized
1984 total	92.19	17.34	18.8
men	50.02	11.51	23.0
women	42.17	5.83	13.8
1980 total	88.53	20.10	22.6
men	49.52	14.04	28.4
women	39.01	6.06	15.5
1976 total	79.17	22.66	28.6
men	46.11	16.72	36.3
women	33.06	5.94	18.0
1972 total	72.79	21.66	29.8
men	44.10	16.40	37.2
women	28.69	5.26	18.3

Sources: U.S. Department of Labor, *Employment and Earnings*, 1/85; *Labor Force Statistics; Statistical Abstract of the U.S.*, 1984. Figures for male and female membership 1972–1978 based on estimates from *Statistical Abstract*.

non-union workers increased by 1.1 million. **Consequently, there was a net loss of 800,000 jobs overall in these industries, but a much larger loss of union jobs.**

In the service sector, employment increased by five million between 1980 and 1984, but union membership in the service sector fell by 700,000. Almost half of the loss was in the transportation industry, where deregulation intensified anti-union employment practices. In the public sector, employment declined by 300,000 jobs, and the number of union members declined by 100,000. The rate of unionization in the public sector held steady at 35.9%.

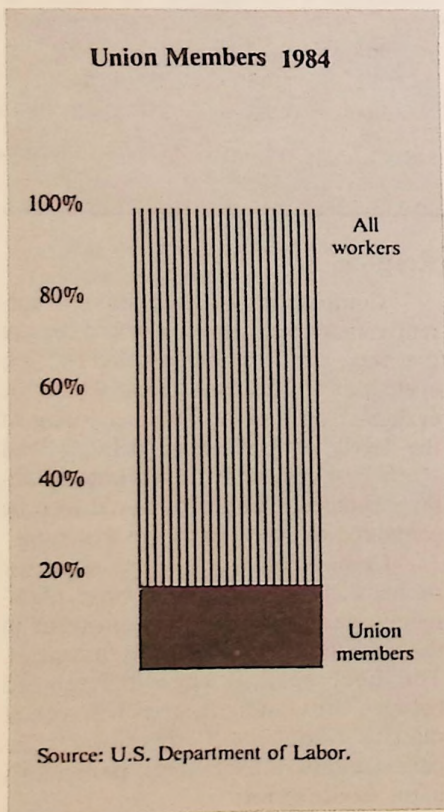
Women in Unions

The number of women organized in unions rose from about 4.9 million in 1970 to 6.4 million in 1978, and then began to decline in absolute terms and as a percentage of all employed women wage and salary workers (see Table 1). The decline in the number of men in trade unions, however, began at an earlier point after reaching a peak in 1974, and

fell at a much faster rate. As a result, the percentage of trade unionists who are women has risen steadily over the years (Graph 1). **Today, over one-third of all union members are women.**

But the unionization of women workers has not kept pace with the enormous increase in women in the workforce. Only 13.8% of all women workers are organized, compared to 18.3% in 1972. Women workers are still less likely to be organized than men in almost every industry and occupation, including the public sector. In 1984, 23% of all male workers were union members. If women workers were organized at the same rate, almost four million members would be added to the ranks of organized labor.

Industries and occupations with large numbers of women workers are among the least organized (see Table 2). Moreover, the unionization rates for all of these industries and occupations fell between 1983 and 1984; organizing campaigns have yet to reverse the trend in declining memberships.



(continued on page 11)

Union Men and Women

(continued from page 10)

Young Workers

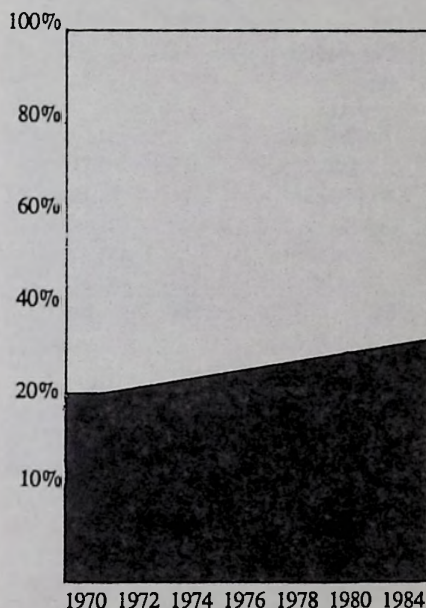
One of the most disturbing facts revealed by the Department of Labor statistics is that young workers are the least likely to be organized, and the least likely to join a union when their workplace is covered by a union contract. Only 7.9% of all workers age 16 to 24 are union members, compared to 18.2% for workers age 25 to 34 years old, 23.9% for 35 to 44 year olds, 25.5% for 45 to 54 year olds, and 25.0% for workers age 55 to 64. After age 65 the unionization rate falls to 9.8%. The low unionization for young workers and elderly workers is linked to their prevalence in the largely unorganized industries of the service sector.

Perhaps even more disturbing is the fact that young workers are less likely to become union members when their workplace is organized. Over 2.5 million workers are covered by union contracts but are not union members. Only 82.9% of workers age 16 to 24 join the union when the workplace is under union contract, as compared to 87.4% of all workers age 25 and over. Young women workers are even less inclined to join — only 79.1% become union members. The prevalence of union members in organized workplaces climbs with age: 91.6% of workers age 65 or over join the union when the workplace is under union contract.

Union Wages

According to the AFL-CIO, 65% of all union households earn between \$20,000 and \$50,000 a year, compared to 53% of the general population. **Department of Labor statistics indicate that wages for unionized workers as a whole outpace non-union wages by an average of 33%, or more than \$100 per week.** Union wages are higher for every industry and occupation (see Table 3). Moreover, union membership decreases the wage differential between male and female earnings. Average wages for non-union women full-time wage and salary workers are only 67.3% of the average wages for non-union men; average wages

Graph 1. Women Trade Unionists as a % of All Trade Unionists, 1970-1984



Source: U.S. Department of Labor; *Statistical Abstract of the U.S.*, 1984.

for union women are 74.5% of wages for union men, and 90% of the wages for non-union men (see Table 4).

Obstacles to Organizing

Within the next ten years, 16 million workers will join the labor force. Department of Labor projections indicate that nearly two-thirds of these new workers will be women. Over 80% of all women age 20-45 — married and single — will be in the labor force by 1995. Employment in the service sector, where the unionization rate now stands at 7.3%, is expected to account for 74% of all the new jobs created over the next decade. Much of the growth will take place in the "Sun Belt"

states, where fewer workers are organized.

In its recent report on "The Changing Situation of Workers and Their Unions," the AFL-CIO Committee on the Evolution of Work reviews the recent increase in anti-labor practices. According to the report, 95% of all private sector employers actively resist unionization, and 75% hire "labor-management" firms to avoid unionization. The report estimates that employers spend \$100 million per year for professional union-busting consultants. Employer resistance continues beyond representation elections. Over one-third of all new bargain-

(continued on page 12)

**Table 2
Female Work Force and Overall
Unionization Rates
By Industry and Occupation, 1984**

	Women as % of all workers	Unionization rate for all workers
Industry		
Mining	17.0%	17.7%
Construction	1.7	23.5
Manufacturing	32.5	26.0
Transportation & public utilities	25.8	38.7
Wholesale & retail trade	47.4	7.9
Finance, insurance, & real estate	57.6	2.7
Services	60.7	7.3
Government	51.0	35.8
Occupation		
Sales	47.9	6.3
Administrative support & clerical	79.9	14.0
Services	60.8	11.7
Operators, fabricators, & laborers	26.0	33.1

Source: U.S. Department of Labor.

Union Men and Women

(continued from page 11)

ing units are unable to secure contracts due to employer refusal to bargain.

The report notes that in Canada, where the right to organize has been preserved, trade union membership increased from 30 to 40% of the workforce during the same period that it fell from 30 to 20% in the U.S. This growth in the Canadian trade union movement occurred despite the fact that Canadian workers share many common employers with workers in the U.S., and face high levels of unemployment and similar shifts in the composition of the workforce.

Overcoming Obstacles

While there are many obstacles to organizing, especially under the Reagan Administration, organizing is the only way to recoup the losses sustained over the last several years. The AFL-CIO report states that:

"There must be a renewed emphasis on organizing. The large increase in the workforce and in the extent of employer opposition requires an equal increase in the emphasis placed on organizing and the resources devoted to organizing."

The figures cited above lead to several conclusions in line with this basic position:

- First, growth in the service sector — 5 million jobs between 1980 and 1984 — demonstrates the need for a coordinated organizing campaign by unions in that sector, such as the Retail, Wholesale, and Department Store Union (RWDSU), the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW), the Service Employees (SEIU), the State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), and others. Organizing in this sector will bring more women, minorities, and young people into labor's ranks.

- Second, while organizing in the service sector is important, it is also essential to stem the tide of declining union membership in manufacturing, construction, and mining. Historically, these sectors of the economy have set the pace for wages and benefits because of their high level of unionization.

As the figures above show, the decline in union membership in these sectors is only partially related to an overall

Table 3
Median Weekly Earnings for
Union and Non-Union Workers
by Industry and Occupation, 1984

Occupation	Union	Non-Union
	Members	Workers
Precision production, craft, and repair	\$483	\$331
Technicians	424	369
Operators, fabricators, and laborers	389	241
Sales	355	309
Administrative support and clerical	365	257
Services	262	181
Industry		
Construction	549	306
Manufacturing	388	327
Transportation and public utilities	482	402
Government	406	338
Wholesale and retail trade	363	253
Services	323	281

Source: U.S. Department of Labor.

decline in employment. Nearly 60% of the decline in union membership is related to the rise in non-union employers. This results from several factors:

- technological changes which allow production to take place on a smaller scale, as in the case of the steel mini-mills;
- increased contracting-out by unionized employers;
- increased "double-breasting" by union employers seeking to evade union contracts; and
- the rise of new industries, such as the high-tech manufacturing industries.

The first three factors play a critical role in all of the established basic manufacturing and mining industries and in construction.

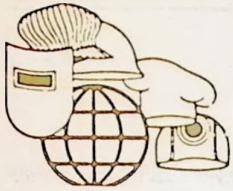
Trade unionists are now bombarded with media claims that basic industry has entered an irreversible decline. Industrial unions have been pressured to seek membership gains in the service sector. The fact is that U.S. industry is being restructured on an anti-union basis. This requires a response by the steel, auto, electrical, mine, and building trades unions to organize the unorganized *within* their industries and in related emerging industries.

- Finally, one of the best organizing tools is union victories at the bargaining table and on the legislative front. While organizing is essential to winning victories, victories cannot wait. Coordinated bargaining, corporate campaigns, and independent political action are crucial to secure current contract gains. Better contracts will inspire workers in unorganized industries to look to the labor movement as the most effective vehicle to represent their economic interests. □

Table 4
Median Weekly Earnings for Union and Non-Union Workers
By Race and Sex, 1984

	Union Members		Non-Union Workers	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Total	\$444	\$326	\$362	\$251
White	451	336	376	253
Black	399	303	253	218
Hispanic	383	293	254	210

Source: U.S. Department of Labor.



International Labor

Maternity Benefits Abroad

By Fay Hansen

The U.S. labor force participation rate for women is among the highest in the industrialized capitalist countries. Using methods established by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, U.S. rates are well over 60%. Labor force participation rates for women are highest in the Scandinavian countries, however, reaching 75% in Sweden. Canada, Great Britain, Denmark, and Austria also have high rates (see Table 1). But more European women work part-time jobs than women workers in the U.S., including almost half of all Swedish women workers. Over one-third of all British women workers, and two-thirds of those who are married with dependent children, work part-time. Although recession and unemployment have been severe in Europe, extensive social programs provide workers with more of a cushion, and economic pressures on families have not been as great as those in the U.S.

Pay Equity

Moreover, women in other industrial countries benefit from greater wage equality. The wage differential in the U.S. is among the highest of all the industrialized countries. There has been little change in the U.S. differential, while other countries — notably Italy and Ireland — have made considerable progress towards equality in wages (see Table 2). Even in Great Britain, where pay inequality in the manufacturing sector is high, and women are heavily concentrated in clerical and other services, the overall wage differential was reduced from 63% in 1970 to 74% in 1983.

Maternity Leave

Paid maternity leave is provided by law in every major industrialized country except the U.S. In the U.S., less than 40% of all working women are entitled to paid maternity leave, and those who are covered are usually limited to six to eight weeks. A somewhat larger number are entitled to unpaid but job-protected leave for three to four months.

Fay Hansen is Associate Director of LRA.

Table 1
Women Workers Abroad

	women as % of total workforce	female partici- pation rate	% of women who work part-time	women as % of		unemployment rates	
				workforce in services	manufact.	men	women
Canada	42%	59%	24%	51%	23%	11.4	11.5
Japan	40	47	18	43	33	2.7	2.8
France	40	53	16	52	25	5.9	11.3
West Germany	39	49	26	49	25	7.1	9.4
Italy	35	40	—	39	23	6.8	16.2
Sweden	47	74	46	60	22	2.8	2.9
Great Britain	40	58	37	51	24	13.4	8.5

Sources: OECD; EUC. Participation rates are for population age 16 and over.

Under the 1979 Pregnancy Discrimination Act, U.S. employers are prohibited from discriminating against women because of pregnancy or childbirth. But the Act merely requires employers to provide pregnant workers with the same benefits extended to workers with other disabilities. No nation-wide comprehensive paid maternity leave program exists. Paternity leave is not guaranteed by statute, and paternity leave provisions are included in only a small number of union contracts.

British Law

In other major industrialized countries, paid maternity leave and benefits are mandated by law. In addition, the statutory minimums are often exceeded in collective bargaining agreements. Under British law, for example, a worker is guaranteed paid time off for medical appointments during pregnancy. The employer must also provide a paid maternity leave of six weeks at 90% of the worker's gross weekly wage, minus a national insurance maternity allowance of approximately \$30 per week.

The employer's payment is refunded by the state if the employer complies fully with the law. The worker also receives the national allowance for an additional 12 weeks. She maintains the right to return to work after a total of 40 weeks of leave with her seniority and pension rights unaffected by her absence. If her position has been eliminated, she is entitled to

alternative employment with the same terms and conditions as her previous job. All medical costs are covered under national health insurance, and a maternity grant of \$30 is paid by the state, in addition to ongoing child allowances.

British collective bargaining agreements extend the amount of paid leave and provide for flexible working hours or child care when the worker returns. Current contract provisions at Penguin Books, for example, offer 52 weeks of leave, with 20 weeks at full pay and 10 weeks at half pay, plus 15 days of paid leave per year for male or female workers with sick children. Although there is no statutory right to paternity leave in Great

(continued from page 15)

Table 2
Women's Hourly Wages
As a % of Men's, Manual
Workers in Manufacturing

	1975	1982
Italy	79%	87%
Denmark	84	85
France	76	78
Netherlands	73	75
Greece	70	74
Belgium	71	73
West Germany	73	73
Great Britain	67	69
Ireland	61	68
U.S.	64	66

Source: Labour Research Department, *Bargaining Report*, 1/84.

Economic Clips

Recession Not Over for Many

The worst recession in post-war history was followed by a strong pick-up in overall employment. Non-farm employment has risen by 6.8 million over the past two years.

This overall increase in employment, however, masks the fundamental erosion of the core sector of the economy — basic industry. The rebound in employment is uneven, reflecting long-range structural changes in the economy.

According to the Research Department of Continental Bank, employment in manufacturing, construction, and mining “not only bore the brunt of the decline during the recession, but has yet to fully recover to levels prior to the recession. Goods-producing industries have recovered only about 2.2 million of the almost 2.8 million jobs lost during the recession.” Employment in manufacturing is still “630,000 below the level reached at its cyclical peak in mid-1981. The weakness in manufacturing is a continuation of a long-term downward trend. During the 1960’s manufacturing employment accounted for almost 30% of total non-farm payroll employment, but declined to about 23% during the late 1970’s, and currently is 20.6%.”

Continental remarks that “employment in the basic steel industry alone has accounted for about 30% of the total manufacturing employment loss, and other metal industries have accounted for an additional 23% of the decline.”

15% Lack Health Coverage

A new study by the Census Bureau reports that 15% of all Americans — 35 million people — lack any kind of health insurance.

Based on 1983 data, the study says that 75% of the population have private health insurance and 10% are covered by government programs.

Variations occurred according to region and race. In the Northeast, 10.3% were not covered by any kind of health insurance; in the South 18.7%; in the West 18.3%; in the Mid-West 12.1%.

Fourteen percent of whites, 21.8% of Blacks, and 29.1% of Hispanics were not covered by health insurance of any kind.

The 15% overall figure was up from 12% in the late 1970’s, reflecting the prolonged effects of the economic crisis of the 1980’s.

Unemployment Benefits

A recent study by the Congressional Budget Office reveals that unemployment is more severe under the Reagan Administration than at any point in the post-war period. In 1979, 45% of all unemployed people received unemployment benefits. By 1984, this figure had fallen to 25%.

In 1983, unemployed persons aged 16-24 represented only 15% of unemployment insurance benefit recipients, but they comprised almost 33% of all unemployed. Nearly 67% of unemployment insurance recipients in 1983 were men, compared to about 58% of all unemployed workers. About 12% of unemployment insurance recipients were nonwhite, compared to approximately 17% of all jobless persons.

European Execs Like U.S.

According to a recent *Wall Street Journal* survey, the U.S. is the first choice of West Europe corporate executives for foreign investment. Forty-five percent favor the U.S. over any other country, including European countries.

Among the reasons listed for this preference were: access to a large, homogeneous market; expectations of long-term economic growth; political stability; and access to new U.S. technology.

Does your union

subscribe to

Economic Notes?

According to diversification specialists from the management consulting firm of Booz-Allen and Hamilton, who conducted the survey, “the oil-price shocks and nuclear arms debates of the past decade have noticeably affected European business. While the U.S. has faced the same issues, it has done so from a far more sheltered position.”

Another important factor considered by the executives was “reduced pressure from trade unions,” along with “fewer government restrictions.”

Reaganism is good for big business — regardless of nationality.

Cap Cities Union Busting

The recent acquisition of ABC by Capital Cities raises many questions, including its potential impact on those who currently work for ABC. A recent article by David Wazeter, a research for the Pennsylvania State Education Association, in the University of Massachusetts’ *Labor Center Review* examines Cap Cities’ history of union-busting in relation to the 1978 strike of workers at the Wilkes Barre, Pa., *Times Leader* newspaper — purchased by Cap Cities in May, 1978. Wazeter writes:

“Capital Cities headquarters expounds a stridently anti-union policy which they expect their subsidiaries to enforce. Wages are rarely the issue with Capital Cities; the issue is control. The company abhors the idea of unions influencing — in any way — employee relations or production policies. And in order to ‘have their way,’ Capital Cities is willing to play hardball with unions. Labor relations are handled by ‘self-proclaimed union-busting attorneys,’ King and Ballow of Tennessee . . . When the unions refuse to cave in to Capital Cities’ demands and a strike ensues, the conglomerate flies in scabs from its other subsidiaries. This tactic, combined with its huge financial war-chest, enables Capital Cities to publish during a strike.”

Cap Cities was able to decertify four unions at the *Times-Leader* in NLRB elections.

(continued on page 15)

Clips

(continued from page 14)

Workers' Interests Tied

The interests of American workers are closely tied to their counterparts in the developing countries. According to the data released recently by the U.S. State Department, developing countries purchased more than \$75 billion — or 38% — of U.S. merchandise exports in 1983, exceeding U.S. exports to Western Europe and Japan combined.

The developing countries are an important market for U.S. **agricultural goods**. In 1983 \$15 billion in food products, or 43% of the total U.S. food exports, were purchased by developing countries. More than 70% of all wheat exports, and 67% of rice exports, went to developing countries.

At the end of 1983, U.S. direct investment in developing countries totalled \$51 billion, or 22% of total foreign direct investment. □

1985 Trade Union Study Trips Abroad

Counterpart Tours, a division of Labor Research Association, will be sponsoring trips for trade unionists and others to the Soviet Union this summer. All of the trips are hosted by the Soviet trade unions. Prices listed below include round-trip air transportation from New York, all hotels, meals, and other expenses.

Trade Unionists' Tour: \$1675. August 2-19. Visit Leningrad, Baku, Kiev, Zaporozhye, Moscow, and Prague.

Women Trade Unionists' Tour: \$1599. August 9-23. Visit Leningrad, Baku, Moscow, and Prague.

Labor for Peace Tour: \$1725. August 10-25 Visit Leningrad, Volgograd, Odessa, and Moscow.

Nationalities Union Tour: \$1750. August 17-September 2. Visit Moscow, Baku, Tashkent, Leningrad.

Occupational Safety and Health Trip: \$1895. August 17-September 7. Visit Moscow, Volgograd, Baku, Kiev, Leningrad, and Repino.

Summer Teachers' Tour: \$1725. June 21-July 6. Visit Moscow, Baku and Leningrad.

Medical Professionals' Tours: \$1750. Tour #1 July 5-20; Tour #2 August 10-25. Visit Moscow, Leningrad, and Repino.

Economists Tour: \$1895. July 6-27. Visit Moscow, Volgograd, Baku, Kiev, Leningrad, and Repino.

Social Service Workers' Tours: Tour #1: \$2400. July 19-August 10. Visit Central Asia and Siberia. Tour #2: \$1950. August 3-23. Visit the Baltic Republics.

For more information, write or call:

Kate Abell, Director
Counterpart Tours
250 West 57th Street, Room 1428
New York, NY 10109
(212) 245-7501

International

(continued from page 13)

Britain, contract provisions have been negotiated at a number of workplaces, including provisions for up to 30 days of paid paternity leave.

Extensive Provisions

In other European countries, paid maternity leave is more extensive:

- **Belgium** — 1 week at full pay from the employer, plus 13 weeks at 80% of earnings from the state, for manual workers; 1 month of full pay from the employer plus 10 weeks at 80% from the state for non-manual workers. In addition, each woman receives a maternity grant of approximately \$300.

- **Denmark** — 18 weeks at 90% of earnings.

- **France** — 16 weeks at 90% of earnings, plus two additional weeks for multiple births. In addition, maternity grants are paid after medical visits for pre-natal and post-natal care.

- **Italy** — 5 months at 80% of earnings, plus an additional 26 weeks at 30% of earnings.

- **Luxemburg** — 16 weeks at 100% of earnings, which may be extended to 20 weeks. In addition, a maternity grant of approximately \$650 is paid by the state.

- **Netherlands** — 12 weeks at 100% of earnings.

- **West Germany** — 14 weeks at 100% of earnings, with an option to extend the leave until child is 6 months old; plus a maternity grant of approximately \$30.

Moreover, all of these countries provide some form of national health care which covers medical expenses. Most give child allowances on a monthly cash-grant basis from the time the child is born to help defray family expenses.

In Canada, maternity benefits are paid at 60% of earnings for 15 weeks. Unions have negotiated more extensive provisions. In 1981, for example, the Canadian Union of Postal Workers won 17 weeks of paid leave at 93% of earnings and 20 weeks of unpaid leave. Locals in the Canadian Union of Public Employees have negotiated 17 to 21 weeks of paid leave at 93% of earnings. In the case of the Postal Workers, the maternity leave provision was secured after a long and bitter strike. □

LABOR RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

80 East 11th Street, Suite 634
New York, New York 10003 • 212-473-1042

Economic Notes Subscriptions

Individuals

 \$10 a year (\$13 foreign)

Organizations

 \$15 a year (\$18 foreign)Bulk Orders of
Single Issues \$15 per 50 copies

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

UNION _____

Facts and Figures

	Consumer Price Index (1967 = 100)	% Change from Year Ago	Average Hourly Wages ¹	Real Hourly Wages (in 1977 \$) ²	Wage Index ⁴ (1977 = 100)	Official Unem- ployed ⁵ (in millions)	Official Unem- ployment Rate ⁶	LRA Unem- ployed ⁷ (in millions)	LRA Unem- ployment Rate ⁸	Avg. Weekly Hours in Manufac- turing ⁹	Avg. Overtime Hours in Manufac- turing ¹⁰	Industrial Production (1967 = 100) ¹¹	1982 ^a	1983 ^a	1984 ^a	Union Wage Changes ¹²	Work Stoppages ¹³ Days Idled Number of Stoppages	
1982 ^a	288.6	6.0%	\$7.68	\$4.82	93.2	10.68	9.7%	23.52	19.9%	38.9	2.3	138.6				3.6%	9.06	96
1983 ^a	297.4	3.0	8.02	4.87	94.6	10.72	9.6	23.41	19.5	40.1	3.0	147.6				2.8	17.46	81
1984 ^a	307.6	3.4	8.33 ^c	4.92 ^c	94.6 ^c	8.54	7.5	20.4	17.0	40.7 ^c	3.4 ^c	163.5				2.3	8.49	62
Apr	304.1	3.1	8.31	4.96	95.3	8.53	7.8	19.88	16.8	41.1	3.7	162.1						
May	305.4	3.1	8.29	4.93	94.8	8.15	7.5	19.46	16.3	40.6	3.3	162.8						
Jun	306.2	3.0	8.33	4.95	95.1	8.58	7.1	21.05	17.3	40.6	3.3	164.4	1983					
Jul	307.5	3.1	8.35	4.94	94.1	8.71	7.5	21.24	17.4	40.5	3.3	165.9	Quarter					
Aug	310.3	3.6	8.34	4.89	94.1	8.38	7.5	20.41	16.6	40.5	3.3	166.0	I				\$120.0	
Sep	312.1	3.8	8.40	4.90	94.2	8.37	7.4	19.75	16.5	40.6	3.3	165.0	II				141.9	
Oct	312.2	3.6	8.38	4.88	94.0	8.37	7.3	19.69	16.4	40.5	3.3	164.3	III				160.2	
Nov	311.9	3.5	8.43	4.90	94.4	8.14	7.1	19.55	16.3	40.7 ^c	3.4	165.2	IV				175.5	
Dec	312.2	3.5	8.48	4.92 ^c	94.7 ^c	8.19	7.2	19.77	16.4	41.3 ^c	3.4 ^c	165.9	1984					
Jan 1985	312.6	3.3	8.49 ^c	4.93 ^c	94.3	8.48	7.4	—	—	40.6 ^c	3.3 ^c	166.6	Quarter					
Feb	313.9	3.5	8.50 ^c	—	—	8.40	7.3	—	—	40.0 ^c	—	166.7	I				184.7	
Mar	—	—	8.54 ^c	—	—	8.40	7.3	—	—	40.4 ^c	—	—	II				195.2	
													III				199.8	
													IV				—	

a = average c = estimated

1. The Consumer Price Index is for Urban Wage and Clerical Work (CPI-W), published monthly by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), U.S. Department of Labor, commonly used in determining COLA formulas for union contracts.

2. The average hourly wage figure is for earnings of production or nonsupervisory workers on private nonagricultural payrolls, seasonally adjusted, published monthly by the BLS.

3. The real hourly wage figure is equivalent to the average hourly wage in column 3 deflated by the CPI-W of column 1. It is published monthly by the BLS.

4. The wage index is the index of real hourly wages from column 4 with the 1977 real hourly wage as the base year. The figures show that the real wage is significantly below the 1977 level — 5.7% below in September 1984. The wage index data are published monthly by the BLS.

5. The official number of unemployed is published monthly by the BLS and designates the number of people actively seeking work.

6. The official unemployment rate is computed by dividing the official number of unemployed by the size of the civilian labor force.

7. The LRA unemployment figure is computed by adding to the official unemployment figure those who are (1) working part-time involuntarily for "economic reasons," i.e., because they cannot find full-time work; and (2) those who are listed as "wanting a job now" but are not actively seeking work because of school attendance, ill health or disability, home responsibilities, or because they do not think they can find a job. About 10% of the adult population not counted in the labor force are included in this category. This category does not, of course, include all those who are in school, disabled, ill, or with home responsibilities, but only those who are in

these situations but who "want a job now" and are able to work. The "want a job now" figure is computed on a quarterly basis by the BLS. LRA's monthly computations are based on the average quarterly "want a job now" figure and the monthly official unemployment and part-time employment figures.

8. The LRA unemployment rate is computed by dividing the number of unemployed in column 8 by the sum of the total official labor force and those "who want a job now" but are not counted in the official labor force.

9. The figure for average weekly hours in manufacturing is published monthly by the BLS, and includes all workers on payrolls, including part-time workers. As a result, it understates the length of the workweek for full-time employees. Consequently, we provide in the next column the figure for the average overtime hours of manufacturing workers.

10. Average manufacturing overtime is published monthly by the BLS. Overtime is considered all time worked in excess of 40 hours per week.

11. The Industrial Production Index is published monthly by the Federal Reserve Board.

12. Union wage changes designate the average annual percent wage increase over the life of contracts negotiated in that year for workers in bargaining units of 1,000 workers or more. The figures are published quarterly by the BLS.

13. Total work stoppages and the number of days lost due to work stoppages are published monthly by the BLS and include only those stoppages occurring in bargaining units of 1,000 workers or more.

14. After-tax corporate profits, including capital consumption adjustments (CCA) and inventory valuation adjustments (IVA), are published quarterly by the Bureau of Economic Analysis. This figure is now generally higher than the after-tax profits before CCA and IVA adjustments. This figure shows the general trend in profits but is a conservative estimate of total cash flow.