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INCOME OF MEN AT ALL-TIME HIGH IN 1955

(Advance data, March 1956 sample survey)

Men's incomes reached a new record level in 1955, according to estimates released today by the Bureau of the Census, Department of Commerce. The average (median) income of men was \$3,400 in 1955, a gain of about \$150 over the previous year. Increased wage rates together with greater regularity of employment in 1955 largely accounted for this substantial rise.

The average income of men had been rising steadily between 1945 and 1952, but had leveled off at about \$3,200 in 1953 and 1954. The proportion of men whose incomes were \$5,000 or over rose from 20 percent in 1953 to about 24 percent in 1955. In 1945, at the close of World War II, only 5 percent of the men had incomes that high.

Among women, the average (median) income in 1955 was \$1,100, about the same as it had been in the preceding three years. Since the close of World War II, the average income of women has increased by about \$200, or 24 percent, while that of men has climbed about \$1,500, or 85 percent. Wage rates have increased sharply for women as well as for men during the postwar period. However, the effect of these wage increases for women has been partly offset by the rising proportion of married women in the labor force, many of whom work only part of the year. In 1955, in particular, large numbers of married women entered the labor market after midyear when job opportunities were expanding rapidly.

The median income of farm residents did not change significantly during the year, although it has fallen by about 16 percent from the postwar peak in 1951. Among nonfarm residents, the median income of men rose by \$200, or 5 percent, between 1954 and 1955, whereas the median income of women did not change. The largest relative gains among men were

reported by businessmen and sales workers, whose incomes rose, on the average, by 16 percent. Moderate increases were also reported by operatives and craftsmen, the two largest occupation groups.

The 1955 income data presented in this report were obtained from the Bureau's Current Population Survey of March 1956. Additional income data from the survey for persons and families will appear in more detailed reports to be issued later this year. Other data relating to the income received by the population are available from the Personal Income Series of the Department of Commerce, the Federal Reserve Board Survey of Consumer Finances, Federal income tax data, and Old-Age and Survivors Insurance wage record data. These data are collected for different purposes and, therefore, differ in several important respects. A discussion of the comparability of these data may be found in Current Population Reports, Series P-60, No. 19, "Income of Persons in the United States: 1954."

Information on income was collected in the Bureau of the Census Current Population Survey from the civilian noninstitutional population and members of the Armed Forces living off post or with their families on post in continental United States. Since the estimates are based on a sample, they are subject to sampling variability. Particular care should be used in interpreting medians and other figures when based on relatively small numbers of cases, as well as small differences between figures. Moreover, as in all field surveys of income, the figures are subject to errors of response and nonreporting.

Income as defined in this report represents total money income, or the sum of money wages and salaries, net income from self-employment, and income

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other than earnings. The median income is the amount which divides the income distribution of persons into two equal groups, one group having incomes above the median and the other having incomes below the median. The medians are based on the income distribution of persons who received some income during the calendar year.

This report covers money income only, prior to deductions for taxes. Inasmuch as farmers typically receive an important part of their livelihood in the

form of goods produced and consumed on the farm rather than in money, this factor should be taken into consideration in comparing the income of farm and nonfarm residents.

In comparing income data for 1955 with those for previous years, one should take account of the fact that changes in income were accompanied by changes in prices. Therefore, an increase or a decrease in income does not necessarily represent a similar change in economic well-being.

DISTRIBUTION OF PERSONS 14 YEARS OF AGE AND OVER BY TOTAL MONEY INCOME, BY SEX, FOR THE UNITED STATES, FARM AND NONFARM:
1945 AND 1952 TO 1955

Total money income	Both sexes				Male				Female			
	1955	1954	1953	1945	1955	1954	1953	1945	1955	1954	1953	1945
UNITED STATES												
Total persons.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Percent with income.....	69.2	66.7	67.9	65.3	91.8	89.8	91.3	89.5	49.2	46.3	46.4	45.1
Percent without income.....	30.8	33.3	32.1	34.7	8.2	10.2	8.7	10.5	50.8	53.7	53.6	54.9
Percent of those with income.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Loss.....	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.4	0.9	1.0	1.1	0.6	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.1
\$1 to \$499.....	15.8	15.1	15.1	18.7	8.5	8.6	8.7	11.6	27.7	26.2	26.3	30.3
\$500 to \$999.....	12.8	12.9	12.4	19.4	8.8	8.8	8.3	16.5	19.3	19.9	19.5	24.3
\$1,000 to \$1,499.....	8.7	8.7	8.2	15.9	7.0	7.3	6.4	13.8	11.6	11.2	11.3	19.4
\$1,500 to \$1,999.....	7.0	7.9	7.5	12.8	5.8	6.5	6.0	12.2	9.0	10.2	10.1	13.8
\$2,000 to \$2,499.....	7.9	7.8	8.8	10.8	7.0	6.7	7.6	13.2	9.4	9.8	10.7	7.0
\$2,500 to \$2,999.....	6.3	7.3	7.4	7.7	6.2	7.4	7.4	10.7	6.4	7.0	7.4	2.7
\$3,000 to \$3,499.....	7.7	8.4	8.8	5.7	8.2	9.3	10.1	8.4	7.0	6.9	6.5	1.1
\$3,500 to \$3,999.....	6.5	7.2	7.1	3.1	8.3	9.1	9.2	4.8	3.7	3.8	3.4	0.3
\$4,000 to \$4,499.....	6.5	6.0	6.1	1.5	8.9	8.4	8.7	2.3	2.6	1.8	1.7	0.2
\$4,500 to \$4,999.....	4.6	4.2	4.1	1.0	6.9	6.2	6.1	1.5	0.8	0.8	0.6	0.2
\$5,000 to \$5,999.....	6.9	6.2	6.4	1.6	10.3	9.2	9.5	2.4	1.2	1.0	1.0	0.1
\$6,000 to \$9,999.....	6.8	5.8	5.5	0.8	10.5	8.8	8.5	1.3	0.8	0.9	0.5	0.1
\$10,000 and over.....	1.9	1.8	1.6	0.5	2.9	2.7	2.3	0.8	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.1
Median income for persons with income..	\$2,323	\$2,301	\$2,341	\$1,360	\$3,354	\$3,199	\$3,223	\$1,811	\$1,116	\$1,161	\$1,168	\$901
URBAN AND RURAL NONFARM												
Total persons.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Percent with income.....	69.9	67.8	68.4	67.4	92.2	90.5	91.9	90.5	50.7	48.2	48.3	48.8
Percent without income.....	30.1	32.2	31.6	32.6	7.8	9.5	8.1	9.5	49.3	51.8	51.7	51.2
Median income for persons with income..	\$2,570	\$2,494	\$2,513	\$1,478	\$3,652	\$3,469	\$3,421	\$2,042	\$1,225	\$1,252	\$1,250	\$962
RURAL FARM												
Total persons.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Percent with income.....	64.7	60.0	60.9	55.8	89.6	85.2	87.3	85.3	38.4	32.7	32.9	27.4
Percent without income.....	35.3	40.0	39.1	44.2	10.4	14.8	12.7	14.7	61.6	67.3	67.1	72.6
Median income for persons with income..	\$1,000	\$1,044	\$1,083	\$765	\$1,339	\$1,342	\$1,394	\$904	\$473	\$499	\$482	\$431