responding quarter of 1948. Gains in average hourly earnings offset the drop in average weekly hours in the period. Average wages in covered industry declined 6.6 percent from the October–December average, in accordance with the usual seasonal pattern following end-of-year bonus payments and holiday-season employment. The decline in the number of weekly hours of work also contributed to this reduction.

An estimated 2.7 million employers reported payment of taxable wages in the first quarter of 1949, the same number as in the fourth quarter of 1948 and 3.8 percent more than in the first quarter of 1948.

### Employment Covered by Social Insurance

Estimates of employment covered by old-age and survivors insurance and State unemployment insurance, and of noncovered employment for selected industries, presented in the December 1948 Bulletin on a fiscal-year basis, are shown here for the calendar years 1947 and 1948. Previous estimates of covered employment on both a fiscal and calendar-year basis have included Alaska and Hawaii. To make the covered employment data consistent with data on the labor force and selected industries, covered employment for Alaska and Hawaii is now excluded from the series. For the first time employment during the year is shown in the series.

The civilian labor force in an average week in 1948 numbered 61.4 million persons; from 59.2 million in January the number rose to a peak of 63.8 million in July. Employed workers in an average week numbered 59.4 million, a 2.4-percent rise from the 1947 figure. Unemployment averaged slightly more than 2 million in both years and in 1949 ranged from 2.6 million in February to 1.6 million in October.

Employment covered under old-age and survivors insurance in an average week rose from 34 million in 1947 to 35.3 million in 1948, practically equaling the increase in the employed labor force. The number of workers cov-