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WPA Releases Occupational Survey.

Harry L. Hopkins, Works Progress Administrator, today made 
public for the first time a summary, in the form of a 110-page 
volume, of the vast amount of information on eligible unemployed 
workers which has formed the basis for the Federal Works Program.

The report, entitled "Usual Occupations of Workers Eligible for 
Works Program Employment in the United States", consists chiefly 
of National and State summaries of men and women certified for the 
Works Program, classified according to 160 occupations. It also 
divides these occupational groups according to sex, and separates 
heads of families from other workers. It was prepared under the 
direction of Corrington Gill, assistant administrator.

The National summary is dated January 15, 1936, and has been 
used to plan the WPA program, as well as to supply relief personnel 
to other works projects, since last Spring. It was not released 
for general distribution until today.

"I am issuing this book, despite its tremendous detail, as a 
report to the American people of the way in which our operations 
have been guided by definite facts developed in our Division of 
Social Research", Mr. Hopkins said.
"This volume is only a summary. In every State this information about the eligible workers is available for each county and each city.

Moreover, in the home county of each worker listed in this book, he or she is card-indexed according to age, sex, family situation, education, usual occupation, alternate occupation and work qualified to do under our Program. The card further contains a complete record of his private employment, including employers, positions and duties, rate of pay and length of service, as well as his work record on our Program if he has any. These card-indexes are current.

"We not only had to give people work. We also had to give each community the sort of public improvements and services which its officials wanted. Moreover, we had to give the jobless -- as many of them as we could possibly take -- the kind of work which would preserve, restore or increase their working-ability, and thus make them better competitors for private jobs.

"This mass of accurate information on what certified workers have done and can do, as well as the responsibilities under which they are laboring, has served as our guide in developing the Program."

The volume released today shows that there were a grand total of 6,402,000 workers eligible for Works Program jobs at the outset of last year.

"This 6,402,000 total does not mean we could have employed that number on our program even if we had had the money," Mr. Hopkins explained.
"The figure includes all the employable members of every family, sometimes running as high as seven or eight, whereas the Works Program cannot employ more than one worker in any family.

"Furthermore, a considerable number of these people cannot take Works Program jobs at any given time because of illness, temporary disability, because they have a temporary private job, or for various other reasons."

More than one-third of the 6,402,000 workers, (1,790,306) were women. More than two-thirds of the total workers, (4,406,002) were heads of families. Nearly four-fifths of the male workers were heads of families or a total of 3,722,572. On the other hand, less than half of the women workers, (682,430) were heads of families.

A vivid picture of the complicated task involved in providing useful work projects for the 160 occupational classifications is contained in the National summaries. For example, there were more than 840,000 persons eligible for work on the Program who had no previous work experience. Over half of these were young people between the ages of sixteen and twenty-four coming out of school and into the labor market for the first time. About 300,000 of this inexperienced group were over twenty-five years of age, and these were largely housewives with family responsibilities who were trying to get jobs in a desperate attempt to keep their families together.

There were 618,000 persons experienced only in domestic and personal service work, and 110,000 retail store sales clerks. There were 240,000 office workers. There were 960,000 unskilled laborers, 435,000 farm laborers and so on throughout the 160 job categories listed.
The report defines a worker as "any person, male or female, sixteen years of age or over who, on January 15, 1936, was a member of a house-hold certified by a public relief agency as eligible for Works Program employment; who was working or seeking work; and who had been certified as employable."