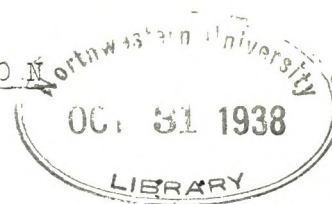


WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION

For Release Sunday,
October 30, 1938

WILLIAMS ANSWERS CHARGES THAT WPA ROLLS ARE PADDED IN ELECTION YEARS

Employment on projects of the Works Progress Administration, year by year, follows the trend of industrial employment and agricultural distress, without regard to political demands, Aubrey Williams, Acting WPA Administrator, said today in making public the results of a WPA employment analysis.

"The perennial partisan propaganda attempting to establish that relief rolls have been padded during election years," Mr. Williams stated, "is based on deliberate falsification of relief statistics and with no appreciation of the underlying economic conditions which have actually determined the trend of relief programs."

His statement was based on an analysis of employment and relief demands from the establishment of the WPA in the summer of 1935 up to mid-October of this year, prepared by Emerson Ross, Director of the Division of Statistics and Economic Research.

"The most flagrant omission in the analyses of partisan opponents," Mr. Williams said, "has been the failure to mention that the two largest Federal relief programs--the Civil Works Administration and the Works Progress Administration--were both started in non-election years. More than 4,000,000 persons were put to work on the Civil Works Program between November 1933 and January 1934, and over 3,000,000 persons were put to work by the Works Progress Administration between July, 1935, and February, 1936.

"These analyses of the relief statistics fail to state that the Civil Works program was liquidated in early 1934--an election year.

"They fail to state that a reduction of over 800,000 occurred in WPA employment from the end of February to the middle of July, 1936--an election year.

"They fail to state that the increase in the autumn of 1936 was entirely the result of the severe drought of that year. What the opponents of the WPA program now pretend to forget is the disastrous drought of 1936 which converted vast areas of the nation's most productive grain lands into a veritable desert, not only destroying crops and livestock but also leaving hundreds of thousands of farm families without any means of day to day subsistence and without any immediate prospect of successfully returning to profitable productive endeavor.

"The situation of the drought stricken farm families is not reflected in the indexes of industrial production business activity, or industrial unemployment, but no political orator, regardless of party, will deny their need for Federal assistance. Cooperating with the Farm Security Administration and other Federal agencies mobilized to aid in the emergency, the WPA in 1936 provided jobs for about 325,000 workers from these farm families. This emergency accounts for the entire increase in WPA employment in the summer and autumn of 1936, which, now that the emergency is a matter of memory only, is being held up as the prime example of political padding of WPA rolls.

"They point out the large increase in WPA employment in 1938 but fail to state that whereas WPA employment has increased by about 1,700,000 since the low point in the autumn of 1937, approximately 3,300,000 persons lost their jobs in private industry and that the

ituation of cotton tenants and laborers in the South became desperate because of the large reduction in income from this year's cotton crop.

"They point out the moderate increase in the WPA during the last three months along with an estimated increase of 1,000,000 in industrial employment during this same period. But they fail to indicate that more than half of the recent increase in the WPA has been in the South (with no election contests) and is caused by the situation of tenant farmers and laborers dependent on the cotton crop—a condition quite independent of the trend of industrial employment. They fail to point out the effect of unemployment compensation which causes a lag between changes in private employment and WPA employment.

"They fail to point out that although 1,000,000 workers have obtained jobs in private industry since July, there are still 10,000,000 to 12,000,000 workers unemployed. And many of these unemployed who have not previously been on WPA are continuously exhausting their private resources and their unemployment compensation benefits and are coming in need of WPA jobs. They fail to state that from June through September, 1938, 50,000 WPA workers left the program voluntarily, the great majority having to take jobs in private industry.

"They fail to point out that in Michigan, where automobile employment has been rising rapidly, the WPA has been reduced by 31,000, or more than 15 per cent, during the last seven weeks. In Detroit the reduction was more than 20 per cent.

"In short, this whole argument is a superficial one in the extreme, with no foundation in fact, and with no recognition of the underlying cause of destitution. The record shows that employment on the WPA has

ollowed the trend of industrial employment and agricultural distress.

"Just as the WPA was reduced with the upturn of private employment in the latter part of 1936 and through the summer of 1937, and just as the WPA was increased when private employment turned downward in the latter part of 1937 and 1938, WPA employment will turn downward as the present upturn in private industry gains momentum and relieves the pressure caused by the extremely serious unemployment problem of recent years."

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WPA EMPLOYMENT

Year	WPA Employment exclusive of drought	Drought	Total
<u>15</u>			
August 31	252,739	-	252,739
September 28	456,013	-	456,013
October 26	777,294	-	777,294
November 30	2,445,954	-	2,445,954
December 28	2,740,070	-	2,740,070
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January 25	2,925,605	-	2,925,605
February 29	3,035,852	-	3,035,852
March 28	2,871,637	-	2,871,637
April 25	2,570,315	-	2,570,315
May 30	2,339,740	-	2,339,740
June 27	2,255,898	-	2,255,898
July 25	2,225,157	24,200	2,249,357
August 29	2,247,264	129,301	2,376,565
September 26	2,247,595	233,921	2,481,516
October 31	2,256,873	324,335	2,581,208
November 28	2,244,245	238,436	2,482,681
December 26	2,153,699	38,710	2,192,409
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January 30	2,138,059	-	2,138,059
February 27	2,145,562	-	2,145,562
March 27	2,114,800	-	2,114,800
April 24	2,070,151	-	2,070,151
May 29	1,999,269	-	1,999,269
June 26	1,821,151	-	1,821,151
July 31	1,568,817	-	1,568,817
August 27	1,479,836	-	1,479,836
September 25	1,451,112	-	1,451,112
October 30	1,475,800	-	1,475,800
November 27	1,519,740	-	1,519,740
December 25	1,629,271	-	1,629,271
<u>18</u>			
January 29	1,900,625	-	1,900,625
February 26	2,075,492	-	2,075,492
March 26	2,394,843	-	2,394,843
April 30	2,581,897	-	2,581,897
May 28	2,678,246	-	2,678,246
June 25	2,767,125	-	2,767,125
July 30	2,966,832	-	2,966,832
August 27	3,066,895	-	3,066,895
September 24	3,120,361	-	3,120,361
October 15	3,166,801	-	3,166,801

Division of
 Statistics and Economic Research
 October 27, 1938