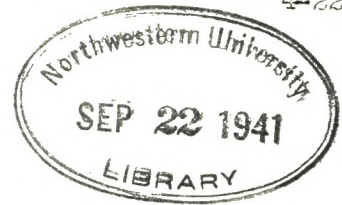


FEDERAL WORKS AGENCY
WORK PROJECTS ADMINISTRATION

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UNEMPLOYMENT DROPS 300,000 IN AUGUST, WPA REPORTS

The number of unemployed declined by 300,000 between July and August to a total of 5,300,000, Assistant WPA Commissioner Corrington Gill announced today on the basis of the monthly unemployment report of the Work Projects Administration.

The labor force of the nation decreased by 200,000 persons from July to August in accordance with seasonal expectations, while employment rose 100,000. The total labor force in August was placed at 55,800,000 and the number of employed at 50,500,000. Since August, 1940, the number of unemployed has declined by 3,600,000.

Changes between July and August in unemployment, employment and the labor force were among the smallest of the current year, Mr. Gill pointed out. Unemployment fell 300,000 from June to July, but the labor force increased 300,000 and employment increased 600,000 in that period.

The July-August seasonal decline in the labor force reversed the sharp upward movement of the preceding months. Between April and July the labor force increased by 2,700,000 persons, largely because of seasonal activity in agriculture and the influx of young workers into the labor market with the closing of school. During this period employment rose 3,700,000 and unemployment declined 1,000,000.

"Seasonal changes have been striking during the months that WPA has been making its studies of employment, unemployment and the labor force," Mr. Gill said. "The increase in the labor force during the last few months, however, has to a considerable extent offset the increase in the number of

employed persons, with the result that the decrease in unemployment has not kept pace with the rapid employment gains.

"A decline in unemployment is expected in September, judging by the experience of last year when thousands of young workers left the labor market and went back to school. The same seasonal factors which cut unemployment drastically last September and caused an increase later in the fall no doubt will be at work this year."

The greatest decreases in unemployment and increases in employment between July and August were found in the rural counties, indicating that the seasonal high level of agricultural activity was continuing. In the five largest metropolitan centers employment remained unchanged while the labor force and unemployment decreased by the same amounts. In other urban areas there was little change among the categories of employed, unemployed and labor force.

In August, as in all previous months covered by the unemployment surveys, the rate of unemployment was consistently lowest in the rural counties and highest in the five largest metropolitan centers.

The "Monthly Report of Unemployment" was inaugurated early in 1940 by the WPA Division of Research under Howard B. Myers, Director of Research. A representative cross-section of the work force is interviewed each month, providing a direct and up-to-date measurement of unemployment and employment. Publication of the reports was authorized last month after comparison with the 1940 census and repeated tests had demonstrated the reliability of the findings.

(Attached is a table from the Monthly Report of Unemployment covering data from April, 1940, through August, 1941.)

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Table I

Absolute and Percentage Estimates of the Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment April 1940 to August 1941

Total United States

Month and year	Labor Force		Employment		Unemployment	
	As a percent of the population 14 years and older 1/	In millions of persons	As a percent of the population 14 years and older 1/	In millions of persons	As a percent of the population 14 years and older 1/	In millions of persons
<u>1940</u>						
April	54.3	53.9	45.4	45.1	8.9	8.8
May	55.0	54.7	46.5	46.3	8.5	8.4
June	56.6	56.3	47.9	47.7	8.7	8.6
July	57.3	57.0	47.9	47.7	9.4	9.3
August	57.0	56.7	48.0	47.8	9.0	8.9
September	55.4	55.2	48.3	48.1	7.1	7.1
October	55.1	54.8	47.6	47.4	7.5	7.4
November	54.0	53.9	46.4	46.3	7.6	7.6
December	53.4	53.2	46.3	46.1	7.1	7.1
<u>1941</u>						
January	53.0	52.8	45.4	45.2	7.6	7.6
February	52.8	52.7	45.6	45.5	7.2	7.2
March	52.6	52.4	45.8	45.6	6.8	6.8
April	53.7	53.3	47.0	46.7	6.7	6.6
May	54.4	54.0	48.7	48.3	5.7	5.7
June	56.2	55.7	50.2	49.8	6.0	5.9
July	56.5	56.0	50.9	50.4	5.6	5.6
August	56.3	55.8	51.0	50.5	5.3	5.3

1/ Excludes institutional population, and estimated number of persons in the armed forces.

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 Work Projects Administration
 Division of Research