

Hundreds of Men Leaving WPA Rolls For Defense Jobs

Training Courses "Brush-Up" Rusty Mechanics For Good Paying Jobs

The Works Projects Administration has struck a gold mine. It has tapped a vein yielding the most valuable asset, the most needed commodity in America today, skilled manual labor.

And it has added another and powerful shoulder to push the national defense program, at the same time reducing, by millions, the burden of WPA rolls for the future.

If you'll look around, you'll notice that many a long-time WPA worker's wife is wearing a snappy new hat these days. She can afford it now. Hubby's back at his old trade, at Journeyman's pay, and will be paying income taxes to the government instead of getting a government check. He's working on defense, he likes his job, and his boss likes him.

Industry, big and little—was skeptical when WPA workers were first proposed to man some of its idle machines. But so desperate were employers for the skilled workmen, that they consented to try out a few recommended as competent. They watched them closely, ready to bounce them out before they ruined too much machinery.

Today that attitude on the part of industry has completely changed.

There are standing orders from a growing list of large industrial plants in Southern California engaged in defense work, for all the trained men the WPA can send them. In a score of plants, some of the top mechanics and skilled artisans came directly from the WPA rolls to their present well-paid jobs. They had a hard try-out, they were put to the most exacting tests of skill and endurance, and made good.

It is because the high percentage of applicants coming from WPA who have proved fit and capable has been so much higher than that of the run-of-the-mill prospects applying for jobs, that the employers have declared they'll take on all the WPAers they can get.

The secret of why the WPA men all seem to click in the new jobs lies in the fact that they've already gone through a tough weeding-out process at the hands of WPA interviewers who realize that the success of their program depends upon their recommending only workers sure to qualify. The WPA applicants have been trained, intensively, for the job they want; they are eager and in their ears is the parting encouragement of the WPA interviewers.

"You're qualified. Hop to it. Look 'em in the eye and tell 'em you want to go to work!"

Not much has been written about the start of the vocational training project of the WPA, begun when it became apparent that due to the lack of an adequate apprentice system in the American industry during the past twenty years, there would soon be a great hue and cry for skilled mechanics when defense orders began to pile up. Officials went ahead quietly, with the full co-operation of State and local boards of education, and set up 177 day and night mechanical training classes in 53 high schools in all 46 counties in the Southern California area. Equipment was installed, and skilled, practical journeymen instructors were engaged.

You may have passed some

WPA Men Click In Defense Work



From the rolls of the WPA in Southern California, following intensive training and try-out periods in factories, hundreds of skilled workmen—forced out of their jobs during the depression—have been restored to good-paying jobs in private industry. Defense factories have a standing order with the WPA to send all the men they can train. More than 1500 men are now in WPA training schools, certain of good jobs when they finish. In photo, trainees are shown in various branches of industrial work.

warning thought that these workmen have got off, or soon will get off, the WPA rolls, and few have found the WPA a pleasant dish, vaudeville jokes to the contrary notwithstanding—there is a factor of public economy involved that should interest every taxpayer. To train a man in the brush-up course of 16 weeks, paying his WPA wages averaging \$63.60 every four weeks while he is so engaged, costs \$243.40. The on-the-job training costs \$95 more. That makes \$338.40. He gets a job in industry, becomes fully self-sup-

High Honor Goes To McDermid

Ted McDermid, member of the Torrance Sons of the Legion, was honored at the meeting of the Bert S. Crossland Post last Tuesday night when he was presented with the Legion's five-star award, the highest recognition in the gift of the Legion. This medal is offered for excellence in Americanism, patriotism, discipline, leadership and Legionism.

McDermid is the fourth to receive this award, other holders of the honor being Clifford Totten, David Babcock, and Robert L. Lewellen, Jr.

Nine Projects Listed for Defense

Nine projects deemed of prime importance in the national defense program were listed by the Los Angeles city council this week as worthy of grants from the Federal government.

Accordingly, the city engineer was authorized to apply for Federal donations amounting to \$1,727,850 to handle the projects, as follows:

Los Angeles airport relief sewer, \$84,800; Century boulevard, \$445,800; Imperial highway \$292,500; Chavez Ravine sewage rack, \$92,950; Seaside avenue, \$67,000; "G" street extension, \$70,500; Alameda street, \$223,800; Henry Ford avenue, \$24,200; and Anza avenue, \$418,000.

The government will be asked to allocate this money out of the special fund of \$150,000,000 set up by Congress for PWA defense projects.

SELL DEAD SWAN

Killed by a hard driven golf ball a tame swan belonging to the Otahuhu Golf club in New Zealand was sold to aid the club's patriotic fund.

JUTE IN PERU

After several unsuccessful attempts by Peruvians and Japanese, Japanese are now cultivating Indian jute in the Amazon valley of Peru and expect this year's crop to be over 1000 tons.

Millions of Tax Dollars To Be Saved By Transfers From WPA Relief Rolls

There are true stories galore of men who had almost given up hope of ever getting back on their feet, making the grade, recovering their confidence and again becoming contributing instead of receiving members of the American economic family. Skilled workers get real money these days, and they earn it. The trouble with WPAers has been that they couldn't get work at their regular trades during the depression and when the cupboard got empty, had to take anything they could get. They naturally got out of practice, and too often, lost courage. The procession began to pass them by. They needed a leg up, and the vocational program has provided it.

It must be a grand and glorious feeling to be a housewife and have her husband come home with a pay check representing wages at \$1.25 an hour, instead of the \$52.80 a month from WPA which she has tried to stretch over rent, food, utilities, shoes for the kids and a movie on Saturday night. And there are an increasing number of such housewives in the South and these days. In one plant alone, in Los Angeles, there are 200 former WPAers earning \$1.25 an hour or better. Some, even more fortunate, are really going to town. One 66 year old workman laid down his WPA shovel to qualify, after a short training, as a skilled builder of delicate instruments used in the manufacture of a new aircraft bomb-sight, getting \$3 an hour.

In another case, a 54 year old WPA worker who had been ditch digging for \$32.80 a month, took a refresher course of 40 hours and was sent to an airplane parts plant. He was assigned as helper to the expert operator of an intricate machine. The operator gets \$6 an hour, and he is in line to take over an operator's job on an idle machine as soon as he has a little more training. Then he'll also get \$6 an hour—compared to his \$52.80 on WPA. An exceptional case, of course, but the fact remains that these workmen would still be working at the coarsest manual labor, at meager pay, had it not been for the vocational training project.

There are a score or more of graduates of the WPA training course in every one of the major aircraft factories of Southern California. Men from the training course are also in ship-building yards, in air fields, in metal plants, foundries, welding factories, pattern-making shops—all sorts of industries allied with defense work. And every day more names are dropped from WPA rolls, as more workers find permanent places in productive private industry.

Women on WPA also are affected. Already training classes have been set up to get them ready for placement in industries that are clamoring for more skilled workers. At Long Beach, and at El Monte, classes are being trained for work in airplane plants, electrical works, drill press operation and other trades. In Los Angeles the way is being paved for WPA women workers to take jobs in the needle industries, which are beginning to accumulate a backlog of orders for shirts, coats, overalls and other garments needed for defense.

H. Russell Amory, Administrator of the Work Projects Administration for Southern California has now got his whole establishment geared to aid in the defense effort in this area. Forty seven per cent of all WPA activities are now devoted entirely to defense. But with the vocational training project, he is directly translating the brawn and brains of forgotten American workmen into armaments to defend the nation, and restoring those workmen to the ranks of the self-sustaining.

BITTEN BY CHOW
Mrs. Yvonne Watson, 1926 Estrella, Los Angeles, was bitten by a chow dog at the home of Walter F. Evans, 1024 Cota ave., according to a report turned in to the local police station recently. The dog will be kept confined and under observation for some days.

DISMIS!
Doyle Ho, Torrance, charged with the release of a 1940 Cabrillo released on Saturday morning in the municipal

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