

# Counting the Jobless-Out

The family skeleton is finally being dragged out of the closet, brought into the parlor, and the clan of respectables are going to examine and discuss it. The rattling of bones has become too annoying. The cousins and the sisters and the aunts must swallow their pride. They will manfully admit their disgrace and see what can be done about it.

For in this, our great land of the free and the brave, the noble citizens consigned to involuntary poverty are to be finally branded. We are going to know about them, numerically. Spiritually they can be evaluated only on Madison Street, Chicago, on the great Bowery in New York, in the hell-holes of despondency in every city of our great country.

The jobless census is on. Our bureaucrats have appropriated our money for the purpose of ascertaining what everybody knows—that millions of us are prevented by our insane laws from going to work, barred from producing things we want. Well, when our enumerators know how many of us are willing to be slaves, what will they do about it? Nothing. For they know not how.

During one week—a sort of Holiday Week—all the nation's "Bums" will be registered. No, they unashamedly will register themselves. They will boldly fill out a paper and say: "Here you see the signature of a citizen of the grandest country on earth, able in body, sound in mind, but a bum. Record me." There will be millions of them. Some poor souls will rebel at this act of abasement

and tear up the questionnaires. The experts will not have a full count. They will have a record of those only whose self-respect has been completely destroyed by a continued condition of economic slavery.

In order to overcome this remaining spark of self-respect in some of our citizenry, this branding of the unemployed was preceded by a big publicity campaign. The leading political figures held a conference and, in phrases of the well-fed, urged the many down-and-outers to record themselves as a duty of citizenship. "Come, my poor bums, let us know who you are, so that we can tax the other fellows who are still able to beat this economic game. And with the proceeds thereof, minus the salaries of the bureaucrats and political henchmen, we will throw you crumbs

of bread, and mayhap show you a circus."

In the interests of efficiency, the administration plans a study of unemployment census methods employed abroad. We will go to Fuehrer Hitler, to Comrade Stalin, to Il Duce Mussolini for advice and counsel on the proper way to find out how to brand our economic slaves. Perhaps there too, one day, will we find out how to employ them—in concentration camps and on forced labor projects.

—F. C.

See: "Progress and Poverty," pp. 5-6; 356-357.