

Ammunition for the Workers' Arsenal

By MANUEL GOMEZ.

Insecurity—the Workers' Constant Attendant.

A MERICAN industry is the greatest in the world. In output, in technical equipment in organization, in character of workmanship, the United States presents the finest example of industrial efficiency that has ever been known. When we speak of American industry we mean American workers—for it is the workers whose brain and brawn have made industry what it is.

Yet the workers, who give life to this wonderful system of factories, mines, mills, railroads, have no hold whatever upon it. They can be separated from their jobs in half an hour by a boss who does nothing but "own."

Great numbers of workers are thrown out of work regularly, thru no incapacity of their own, thru no flaw in the technical process, but simply as a result of private ownership of industry and production for profit instead of for use. Periodic large-scale unemployment is no "accident" under capitalism; it is part and parcel of the capitalist system of commodity production. In this country there have been unemployment crises amounting to panics, in 1837, 1847, 1857, 1873, 1884, 1890, 1893, 1896, 1903-4, 1907, 1911, 1913-14 and 1920-21.

There are at least 2,500,000 workers unemployed in the United States today. This number will be multiplied when the present bubble of credit inflation bursts. During the terrible crisis of 1920-21 the number of unemployed exceeded 7,000,000.

What such a crisis means in terms of the uncertainty of a worker's contact with his job is graphically shown in the following figures giving the decrease in the number of wage earners between 1919 and 1921 in a selected group of industries:

DECREASE IN NUMBER OF WAGE EARNERS IN SELECTED GROUP OF INDUSTRIES

Industry	Average Number of Wage Earners	
	1919	1921
Metal, machine products, shipbuilding.....	1,903,797	1,158,657
Lumber	610,346	474,875
Printing and publishing.....	287,278	268,081
Rubber goods	158,549	103,273
Leather and products.....	349,362	280,071
Wearing Apparel	975,780	884,035
Clay, glass, cement products.....	219,298	188,541
Textile	942,610	899,969
Slaughtering and meat packing.....	160,996	177,042
Smelting and refining (non-ferrous).....	39,620	19,014
Total.....	5,847,636	4,393,558

Thus the unemployment decline in these industries reached the unprecedented figure of 22.2 per cent. This was the average. In some of the industries the decline was much greater. In the slaughtering and meat packing group it was 27.3 per cent; in the rubber goods industry it was almost 35 per cent; in the case of the metal, machine products and shipbuilding it reached 39.1 per cent, and in smelting and refining, 52 per cent.