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CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Except in one or two minor details, the form of the questionnaire sent to employers proved highly satisfactory and may be helpful to organizations desirous of collecting complete employment records.
2. The fact that many employers reported on the basis of estimates rather than actual records does not appear to have introduced bias into the conclusions. The errors arising from the use of estimates are probably smaller than would be found in results based solely upon actual records, because the limited number of the latter obtainable would constitute a sample too small to be trustworthy.

II. THE NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

1. Employment is capable of accurate measurement—the same can scarcely be said of unemployment, for the volume of the latter depends very largely upon the relationship between the price asked and the price offered for labor.
2. In 1920–22, the business cycle caused but few members of the families of farmers and other employers to shift from one industry to another.
3. During the 1921 depression the farmers hired about the same number of employees as they did in the previous year. Many industries laid off a large fraction of their working forces but none took on any considerable number of workers. It follows that there was a great reduction in the total volume of employment.
4. The total number of employees on all pay rolls in the United States diminished by about one-seventh between the third quarter of 1920 and the same period in 1921.
5. Although, in 1920, all enterprises having over 100 employees each, together gave employment to only about half the employees then at work in the United States, they were responsible for more than three-fourths of all lay-offs that occurred during the depression.

III. THE VOLUME OF EMPLOYMENT

1. Part-time work as a palliative for unemployment was resorted to by relatively few employers and, at the lowest point of the depression, employees on the pay rolls still averaged 95.3 per cent of full time.

2. The total number of employee hours worked diminished by about one-sixth between the boom of 1920 and the depression of 1921. Factories, mines, railways, and construction enterprises were responsible for the largest part of the total absolute reduction in employment.
3. When enterprises are classified into three groups on the basis of the number of persons employed per concern in the first quarter of 1920, the approximate total reduction in employee hours brought about by the depression was as follows:

Number of employees per enterprise	Reduction in total time worked (millions of hours)	Per cent of peak time lost
20 or fewer	214	3
21 to 100	405	14
Over 100	2,592	28

4. Statistics of the numbers on the pay rolls and of total wages and salaries paid are not sufficient to give an accurate picture of changes in the number of employee hours worked—in other words, they furnish only approximate gauges for measuring fluctuations in the volume of employment.

IV. THE HOURS WORKED PER WEEK

1. Small scale enterprises in general have longer full-time hours for their employees than do larger plants.
2. The longest average full-time hours per week recorded for the first quarter of 1922 were in domestic and personal service (56.7) and the shortest were in building and construction (42.9).
3. The average employee in the first quarter of 1922 worked 48.6 hours per week, or just a trifle more than an eight-hour day for a six-day week.
4. In the same period, employees engaged in domestic and personal service actually worked the longest hours per week (55.5), while those employed in textile and leather factories put in the shortest hours (43.0).
5. On the farms of the United States, persons hired by the week or month work longer hours than do those hired by the day. Hired men put in more hours per week than do hired girls. The working time per week is longer in the North than in the South. More hours per week are worked on farms than in most urban industries.

V. THE EARNINGS OF EMPLOYEES

1. Total payments for salaries and wages in 1921 amounted to about \$32,596,000,000, of which approximately one-third was paid out by enterprises employing fewer than 21 persons and one-half by concerns hiring over 100 workers each.
2. Salary and wage payments for the first quarter of 1922 were less by about 2,729 millions of dollars than were the total disbursements in the third quarter of 1920.
3. The average earnings in 1920 of persons who, in that year, worked in plants employing over 100 workers, was \$1,544. In 1921, because of unemployment, their earnings had fallen to \$1,112, a loss of \$432. Those persons employed in enterprises having fewer than 21 employees received only \$1,121 each in 1920, but in 1921 their earnings had declined only to \$1,077, a diminution of \$44. Workers employed in concerns of intermediate size earned on the average \$1,354 in 1920 and \$1,222 in 1921.
4. Female employees in general earn about three-fourths as much as males.
5. The business depression of 1921 caused a material decline in rates of pay per hour actually worked only in the fields of agriculture, manufacturing, mining, and steam railways.
6. The average rates of pay per hour in various industries cover a wide range—the highest figure in 1921 being 76 cents per hour in finance, and the lowest rate being 25 cents per hour in agriculture. The average for all industries at the close of 1921 was 51 cents per hour.
7. In the spring of 1921 the most common rates of pay per hour for agricultural workers were as follows:

Males hired by the month	14 cents
Males hired by the day	21 cents
Females hired by the week	10 cents
Females hired by the day	10 cents

8. Average earnings per hour of persons employed on farms at that period were somewhat higher, being as follows:

Males hired by the month	21 cents
Males hired by the day	25 cents
Females hired by the week	17 cents
Females hired by the day	15 cents

9. At the same date the average pay per hour for male employees on farms working by the month ranged from 33 cents per hour on the Pacific Coast to 15 cents per hour in the South, while the average pay of female employees hired by the week varied between 26 cents in New England and 12 cents in the East South Central States.