

Brown Shirts in the Making

About 400,000 New York boys, between the ages of 16 and 24, are unable to find jobs. Nearly half of the young men and women in the metropolis are suffering from lack of economic opportunity. This is revealed by a recently completed survey by the Welfare Council, under the auspices of the Greater New York Fund. It would seem from these figures that the worker "over forty" is not the only one shut out of the stream of production.

It might be pertinent to recall that the backbone of Hitler's brown-shirt movement originally consisted of boys who could not find jobs. Born during or immediately after the World War, these unfortunates became the "loafers" who were attracted to the bloody swastika because it gave them a reason for living, a purpose which the economy

of their country denied them. They never had jobs. Robbed of that manliness and independence which are the spiritual by-products of useful occupation, deprived of the opportunity to serve which is the dream of youth, apparently consigned to the dump heap of unattached and unproductive existence, any chance for redemption was welcome.

The brown-shirts were not bad boys. They were jobless boys. To them even so hideous a program as Hitler advocated must have seemed a golden opportunity. He replaced their hateful rags with a meaningful uniform. He took them off the streets into meeting halls. Into their dying souls he poured plausible hope. Others called them loafers and they accepted the designation; he called them men. Their wasting strength

was revived by military drills, and their drooping spirits were thrilled into a new life by songs, and marches and fighting and rationalized robbery. He gave them a purpose. They gave him power.

The percentage of youth unemployed in New York is 47.8.

—F. C.