Mr. Zuern said that during the summer of 1936 there was a definite shortage of skilled labor. It was necessary to import electricians, particularly, and some plasterers, to fill the need of active building in Fresno. While early in the summer there was a slight shortage of good carpenters, there are possibly too many now. Painters are always available. Mr. Zuern felt that the principal reason for the shortage in skilled labor was because during the depression years few young people were apprenticed and also some artisans had reached an age where they are not readily hired by contractors.

As far as the W. P. A. Works Progress Administration Projects were concerned, Mr. Zuern observed that so many building craftsmen had been absorbed into private business, they are finding some difficulty in getting enough really competent craftsmen. His experience also illustrates the fact that there are a good many craftsmen who are becoming too old to be absorbed into private industry.

Another problem of the W. P. A., as well as other relief agencies, is the fluctuating labor market in Fresno due to agricultural seasonal employment and seasonal employment in the fruit packing plants.

Mr. Zuern stated that the building trades in Fresno were well organized and that the Building Trades' Council works in cooperation with the W. P. A. and also with private builders. The present building rate in Fresno is so rapid that the unions are having no trouble placing their own men and, consequently, are not particularly concerned with the few non-union jobs which are always in progress.

Mr. Zuern felt that, on the whole, the quality of construction in Fresno was good, although there were a few contractors building below-standard houses, contracting for their labor at less cost than most contractors were paying and generally being a bad influence in an otherwise wholesome building market. However, he pointed out that all contractors who contracted for their labor were not of this type.