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Economic Crisis In Maquiladora Industry

by Steven Ranieri

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On Feb. 12, the Ciudad Juarez Maquiladora Association claimed that the only two sectors of the maquiladora industry not feeling the effects of the US economic recession are involved in either the production of war materiel or medical equipment and materials. A sample of war materiel producers follows: Honeywell de Chihuahua, Elamex de Ciudad Juarez, Zenith de Reynosa (Tamaulipas state), Cincinnati Electronics in Sonora, and Electronica Inter and Productos de Control in Baja California. According to the association, an overall growth rate of 6% this is expected for the maquiladora industry as a whole. Growth in previous years has averaged 26%. In 1989, the approximately 100,000 workers in Ciudad Juarez earned \$249 million in wages. The city of Tijuana has 520 plants and 58,000 workers; Ciudad Juarez, 320 employing 134,800 workers; Mexicali, 154 plants; Matamoros, 86 plants and 38,000 workers; Nuevo Laredo, 93 plants; Tecate, 86; Monterrey, 79 plants; and in Reynosa and Rio Bravo, 71 plants employing 30,000 workers. According to Raymundo Cepeda Gaona, head of the Campesino and Popular Worker's Coalition (COCYP) in Reynosa, Tamaulipas state, last week about 200 workers were laid off at the Hamill plant. In Ciudad Obregon, Sonora state, 279 workers were laid off at the Coleman de Obregon factory in the last 40 days. In La Paz, Baja California state, 150 workers were laid off at the Lead-Tec factory, according to Moises Uribe Rodriguez, local director of the National Chamber of Manufacturing Industries (CANACINTRA). In addition three major maquiladoras in Ciudad Juarez (Philips, Zenith and Essex) have reported large lay-offs. (Source: El Nacional, 02/13/91)

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