

# THE PROBLEM OF UNEMPLOYMENT

## Proposal Put Forth For Permanent Federal Works Program

(Special to The Press-Maconian)

WASHINGTON, March 17.—The dark cloud which hovers over Washington is the continuing problem of unemployment. It is the most difficult of all Governmental problems because it presents so many complex phases, none of which is capable of solution by itself. Unemployment has to be tackled as a whole, and viewed as a whole. It is like an enveloping fog in which explorers can only grope without being at all certain that they are going in the right direction.

One thing which befores the unemployment problem is the absence of facts and figures upon which everybody concerned can agree. Nobody knows how many persons are actually unemployed, or why. Estimates run from six or seven millions up to ten or eleven millions. No Federal census of the unemployed has been taken since 1930, and the basis of that count is not regarded as presenting a true picture of the situation even as it was then. Such a census has been repeatedly urged, but no agreement has been reached even on the primary definition of "unemployed." Is every person to be listed as "unemployed" who happens not to be at work on the day the count is made, though he or she was working last week and can go back to the same or another job next week? That and such questions as how to divide the employables from the unemployables are points upon which there are as many opinions, almost, as there are students of the question.

All that Washington really knows about unemployment is that there is still a very large number, totaling several millions, who are being supported out of public funds, either working on WPA and WPA projects or on direct relief administered by state and local authorities with assistance from Federal funds. That a very large proportion of industrial and commercial workers who were unemployed one, two or three years ago have now been reemployed is admitted by everybody. The National Industrial Conference Board reports that employment in industry today is almost up to the peak of 1929 and is increasing. But offsetting this is the increase in the number of those who have never been employed, young people who have reached the age of normal self-support in the past few years and have not been absorbed into industry and trade. About 600,000 a year is the normal increase in this group; but again nobody knows how many of them there are.

### Public Works Program

The latest and perhaps the most carefully-considered proposal is a program for Federal public works which has been put forth by a group of sixteen influential members of Congress, who say that 125 others have already assented to it. It is really a declaration of principles intended to govern future legislation, and is based upon the assertion that useful and necessary work must be substituted for private charity and government doles. Slum clearance, soil and water conservation, reforestation, flood and drought control, power development and safety work are listed as ex-

amples of useful work of permanent value.

Ten principles should govern this approach to the unemployment problem, the sponsors say. They are:

1. Work for all who are able and willing to work and cannot find private employment.

2. The work to be useful, productive and efficient as any work anywhere.

3. People to be hired for government works, not because they are 'on relief' but because they need a job and are able to do it efficiently.

4. Facts about the amount of unemployment and the opportunities for employment in private industry to be collected, and the government work program to be enlarged when private industry lays people off and to be cut down when private industry hires them back.

5. No waste, no made-work, but every project to be planned so it will create a dollar's worth of wealth and permanent social value for every dollar spent. This requires that there must be enough money appropriated to allow a reasonable expenditure for materials and equipment, as well as for wages.

6. Government work to be planned so it will enable the people it employs to develop and maintain the kinds of skill and ability which are most likely to be in demand in private industry.

7. Government projects to be definitely planned to stimulate all industry and open new opportunities for Americans. Conserving soils and developing new fertile lands will do this. Low-cost housing will do it. Cheaper power will do it. So will other projects.

8. The recreation, theatre, education and fine arts projects to be continued and improved with a view to developing the hidden creative talents of all groups of citizens in America.

9. The program must be a Federal program, since unemployment is a national problem and most of our needed public works are of interstate character. It will have to be largely financed with Federal funds, with local sponsors' contributions based on their ability to make such contributions.

10. By and large, the program should not be financed by borrowing, but by equitable taxation on the basis of ability to pay and benefits received.

The following members of the House signed the statement:

John Luecke, Maury Maverick, Frank W. Fries, W. D. McFarlane, H. Jerry Voorhis, Robert G. Allen, Knute Hill, Walter M. Pierce, Ed. V. Izac, Jerry J. O'Connell, John M. Coffee, John R. Murdock, Clyde Garrett, Charles J. Golden, Mrs. Caroline O'Day, Charles R. Eckert.

In the decade 1920-30, Texas gained 24.9 per cent in population while the nation's population increased 16.1 per cent—but in the same decade the value of Texas manufactured products increased 50 per cent while that of the United States gained 9 per cent.

## Home Demonstration Club News

BY MRS. T. J. O'NEIL

Macon County Home Demonstration Agent

### DEVELOPMENT OF HOME DEMONSTRATION CLUBS

More and more the women in the county are taking part in the work and programs of the clubs. In order to reach as many women as possible, it is necessary that club members carry the work to their neighbors and friends. The women of Macon county are taking up the work and spreading the gospel in a way to be commended. The following article by Mrs. Fred Slagle, who is program chairman of the Cartoogechaye club, shows what participation in club work means to the women of the club. Other clubs are organizing their work in the same way:

#### Participation in Club Work

When a group of children is organized into a class or club in Sunday school, Missionary society, 4-H club work, boy scouts or any of the other numerous activities in which children may engage, the wise leader sees to it that each child is given something to do and that sooner or later each child will be asked to take part in the programs.

We are all just "children grown up," regardless of our age, and whether we are conscious of it or not, most of us enjoy a program more when we have had a part in preparing it.

In our Cartoogechaye home demonstration club, we have tried to plan programs on subjects of vital importance to the mother and housekeeper. The ladies in our club have responded willingly and with splendid talks and papers when called upon to take part in the program. In a few more months all of our members will have participated in the programs with either a reading or talk on the subject assigned her. The subjects follow the main thought in the lesson for the month.

If your sister club members have not tried this plan, begin with your next meeting and do not stop until each one of your members has served in some way on your programs.

We are thoroughly enjoying our

club work and every woman in the community looks forward to the second Friday afternoon, the time for our regular monthly meeting.

We feel sure that interest in our club work is steadily growing and we wonder if it is not due to the fact that under the able supervision of our County home demonstration Agent, we have all been made to feel that through our efforts, small as they may be, we have had a share in making the club work a success.

(Mrs. Fred M.) Lida A. Slagle

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## If you're planning to BUILD or REMODEL

NEVER before has there been so much attention given to making the modern home more convenient, more liveable. Quality materials are the first step in securing good work. The best workmen can do a better job with fine materials. And good materials are always the cheapest in satisfaction and service. If you are planning to build or remodel, be sure that nothing but the best materials are used. If it is lumber, roofing, cement, brick or anything necessary in the construction of your house, we have it—of proven quality.

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