Jacob Baker gives comprehensive review of Works Program policies and motives.

Challenging critics of the Works Program to a duel of facts, Jacob Baker, Assistant Works Progress Administrator, in an address before the Round Table on Economic Security at the Institute of Public Affairs, University of Virginia, Wednesday afternoon, July 3 declared:

"It is not important that at one time we called our program work relief, at another WPA, at still another Works Projects, or as we are now doing, Works Progress; the fact emerges clearly that back of everything we have done or are doing has been and is the conviction, forced upon us by the unemployed themselves and by our increasing knowledge of the unemployed man and woman's psychology, that giving jobs is better than giving relief, that what destitute people out of jobs want and need is a job — just that, and not a handout, no matter what attractive form that handout may take."

In one of the most comprehensive reviews of the methods by which needy unemployed men and women have been provided with work on public projects since the beginning of the depression, Mr. Baker explained the steps that have led to the new Works Program.

"This business of preventing deterioration of moral fibre of the illions out of work is perhaps the most important consideration", Mr. Baker declared. "But hardly less important from an economic point of view is the effort to prevent the lapsing of skilled workers and highly trained and professional people out of work into a vast pool of unqualified labor through loss of skill and training. And so our policies have in the last two years put increasing emphasis on work programs; and these work programs have, in their turn, developed toward a constantly greater variety and differentiation, so that a greater number of people might be employed in their accustomed trades and skills."

Pointing out that work programs have not only provided employment for the needy, but created structures and facilities of lasting value to the communities throughout the country, Mr. Baker said:
"This sort of proceeding means the increase of a nation's capital, since the FERA has been functioning, despite the jibes about raking leaves and boon-doggling, public wealth in the shape of new buildings, roads, health, educational, and recreation resources, when reckoned in dollars and cents, has been increased by hundreds of millions.

"There is no sort of activity, especially in the construction field, that has not been undertaken by us. About six hundred thousand miles of roads have been improved or constructed. About 1,856 schools have been built, and 30,188 rehabilitated. We have done rural electrification; we have built grade crossings; we have drained hundreds of thousands of malaria-infested swamps; we have built over a million sanitary privies to insure better health conditions in rural communities throughout the country.

"I think it about time that the press and the general public should begin to learn that we have raked leaves and boon-doggled to such good purpose that our work in cement and stone, in increased public health and educational facilities and resources will be remembered in pretty nearly every community in the country for many years to come. If the public has not been given a better conception of these physical accomplishments, it is perhaps our fault, not because of our modesty, but because the relief administration has always been interested more in the needy unemployed person as such than in telling about what was being done."

NOTE:

The full text of Mr. Baker's address is attached.
Address to be given by Jacob Baker, Assistant Administrator, Works Progress Administration, at Round Table on Economic Security at the Institute of Public Affairs, University of Virginia, Wednesday, July 3, 1935.

WORK ASSURANCE

Any present consideration of public affairs in the United States must include the problem of and the measures taken for the relief of unemployed men and women. Five years ago we had mounting unemployment and a minimum of relief. Now unemployment is apparently diminishing, and relief has become a very important function of government.

As I look back on the two years of my connection with the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, I see how during all that time, despite various apparent fluctuations and changes of policy, there has been a certain continuity and consistency of social viewpoint underlying pretty nearly everything we have been doing or attempting to do.

It is not important that at one time we called our program Work Relief, at another CWA, at still another, Works Projects, or, as we are now doing, Works Progress; the fact emerges clearly that back of everything we have done or are doing has been and is the conviction, forced upon us by the unemployed themselves and by our increasing knowledge of the unemployed man and woman’s psychology, that giving jobs is better than giving relief, that what destitute people out of jobs want and need is a job — just that, and not a handout, no matter what attractive form that handout may take.

Frankly, all our efforts have been directed toward this end, to devise projects for the employment of the unemployed, so that they shall have the opportunity to maintain their self-respect, and to maintain their skills and use their previous technical training in useful work. It sounds trite and somewhat amusing to talk of the demoralization that attacks men and women for a long time out of jobs; but the truth frequently has this quality of being so familiar that it becomes a truism. But if the unemployed themselves clamor for work rather than relief, if they organize into Self-Help Cooperatives in order to get off the relief rolls, if they form themselves everywhere into Leagues of the Unemployed whose chief demands are for jobs, then we cannot be accused of smugness when we agree with them, that work is better than the dole, and when we speak of the deterioration of morale among the idle.

There have been many assertions, unsupported as a general rule by any evidence, to the effect that the unemployed do not want jobs; that they differ
from the rest of us in this respect, preferring unfruitful idleness to regular, useful occupation. One situation, however, in which such allegations were made, has been thoroughly investigated, and the investigation has shown how unjust these accusations were. At Baltimore a study was undertaken to determine exactly how frequently and for what reason persons receiving public relief refused to accept jobs. It turned out that only 195 people during the months of March and April were reported to have refused offers of work out of a total of many thousands passing monthly through the local employment office. On closer examination the fact was revealed that only four out of the 195 were cases of unjustified refusal.

On the other hand, we have a number of reliable reports citing instances of relief workers volunteering their services to complete projects after allocations had been exhausted — in Alabama, in California, in New Jersey, in Colorado, actually in pretty nearly every section of the country. I think these cited facts should outweigh the unsupported allegations that have been spread broadcast. We, who have been working in this program, know that the unemployed when offered jobs they are fitted to undertake, will accept them eagerly, and will work hard and faithfully to carry them through.

This business of preventing deterioration of moral fibre of the millions out of work is perhaps the most important consideration; but hardly less important, from an economic point of view, is the effort to prevent the lapsing of skilled workers and highly trained and professional people out of work, into a vast pool of unqualified labor through loss of skill and training. And so our policies have in the last two years put increasing emphasis on work programs; and these work programs have in their turn, developed toward a constantly greater variety and differentiation, so that a greater number of people might be employed in their accustomed trades and skills.

If the jobless millions are to be re-absorbed in a going economic order then surely it is important for them and the nation that their morale be kept up as well as their skill, so that when the time comes they may again help to create with their labor, wealth, and with their earnings provide consumers' purchasing power. In short, we do not contemplate that general unemployment, on anything like the present scale, will continue indefinitely and therefore we are trying to prevent the development of a large number of unemployed from becoming demoralized to the point of unemployability, because of long periods of idleness. This applies to all types of labor, unskilled, skilled, and the professional group. We have no desire to develop such a group as is known in Europe as Luft Molschen.
"people who live on air"—the chronically unemployed intellectuals who have no concrete ways of making a living.

Thus you will see that in America we have definitely committed ourselves to a policy of giving relief through work. In view of the new psychology, the new attitude toward and the greater feeling of responsibility for the problem of unemployment which has developed since the depression, I should be inclined to call this method of providing for the jobless, Work Assurance, a term that puts what we are doing on the same plane as any other form of social security procedure. By the same token I should call the dole method by the name of Subsistence Assurance. There is, Shakespeare notwithstanding, a good deal in a name; and this moniker that I have suggested connotes the idea that a man out of a job, through no fault of his own, is entitled to subsistence, either through receipt of direct relief or by being given work.

Even in this country there is no complete unanimity as to which method, work or Subsistence Assurance, is best. Some of the opposition to the former, has always, it must be admitted, been based on entirely disinterested motives. Nevertheless, in general, we are committed to that way of giving relief.

But abroad, especially in Great Britain, Subsistence Assurance, the dole, as had the greater number of adherents. Indeed, we have come to speak of it as the English system. Perhaps conditions over there are different enough to warrant differences of method. The system now prevalent was rooted in a type of unemployment insurance already in operation during periods of normal economic activity. Transition to the dole, therefore, came naturally and without direct planning or without any conscious decision. It was probably difficult to say at what point aid given ceased to be unemployment insurance and became just a plain dole. Doubt there were other factors, not existing in this country, which also contributed to the adoption of the English method.

More recently, however, some European countries, seeing that the problem was changed in character, have taken our view of it, and have been substituting work for direct relief. Over here, we had practically no unemployment insurance all during good times, and, being plunged right into the middle of a vast unemployment situation, were faced sharply with the necessity for making a choice between Subsistence Assurance and Work Assurance right at the beginning. And actually, there never has been much hesitation as to what that choice should be.

As a matter of fact, both methods of meeting the unemployed crisis have certain points in common; they both distribute money where it is most needed to maintain and restore effective purchasing power, at the base of the social pyramid,
by these elements of the population which will put the money with least delay, into circulation. The family that needs to meet its immediate wants, that must buy groceries and meat, and pay rent, cannot do any saving or investing, but must spend the relief check practically the day it is received.

We had reports from all over the country, during the CWA period, that after a first lag of several weeks, when CWA employees were paying off some of their old debts, the sales in shops that sold the necessaries of life mounted steadily, and that small retail business in general improved greatly. In this respect there is little to choose between the Work Assurance and Subsistence Assurance methods of relief giving. They both quicken the pulse of retail business immediately.

The man or woman on work projects requires a higher budgetary allowance for minimum subsistence than one not working because his minimum of subsistence, when working, includes additional cash for working clothes, carfare, and in many cases even an additional food allowance to maintain health and strength for work. Thus the trend has developed, with some fluctuations, in this country frankly to recognize the facts and, as under CWA and under the new Works Progress plan, to supply full time jobs, at reasonably decent subsistence pay to all employable people, doing away with direct relief, or let us say, Subsistence Assurance, for this category entirely. It follows that, for this reason alone, if for no other, Work Assurance will always be more expensive than Subsistence Assurance; and that may recommend it to those who want living standards maintained and believe it necessary for government to prime the pump of purchasing power. It may be an argument against it in the minds of those who believe that economy and deflation will most surely bring recovery.

This brings us to the entire question of costs, of what the comparative costs of the two methods really are. Roughly speaking you can set the unemployed to work in two ways. You can put them to building what are generally called public works, roads, schools, firehouses, parks, swimming pools, bath houses, sewage disposal plants, installing sewers and water mains, repairing and rehabilitating state capitols and city halls. That is what we have to a great extent been doing ever since November 1933 saw the creation of CWA. This was the old Roman method; the Appian Way was built with relief labor. It probably was the Egyptian way too. Probably Joseph persuaded Pharaoh to build an obelisk or a pyramid during those lean years of crop failure, because it was the least competitive thing he could find for relief labor to do. The Egyptians probably had no need for new roads, since the Nile was their highway; it also was their water supply and their
So, an obelisk, a pyramid, or a temple must have been Joseph's answer to the unemployment problem of his day. The great medieval cathedrals were built in this way.

This sort of proceeding means the increase of a nation's capital; and since the FERA has been functioning, despite the jibes about raking leaves and boon-doggling, public wealth in the shape of new buildings, roads, health, educational and recreational resources, when reckoned in dollars and cents, has been increased by hundreds of millions. There is no sort of activity, especially in the construction field, that has not been undertaken by us. About six hundred thousand miles of roads have been improved or constructed. About 1,856 schools have been built, and 30,188 rehabilitated. We have done rural electrification; we have built grade crossings; we have drained hundreds of thousands of malaria infested swamps; we have built over a million sanitary privies, to ensure better health conditions in rural communities throughout the country.

I think it about time that the press and the general public should begin to learn that we have raked leaves and boon-doggled to such good purpose that our work in cement and stone, in increased public health and educational facilities and resources will be remembered in pretty nearly every community in the country for many years to come. If the public has not been given a better conception of these physical accomplishments, it is perhaps our fault, not because of our modesty, but because the relief administration has always been interested in the needy unemployed person as such than in telling about what was being done. The work has throughout been fitted to the skills and trainings of the unemployed, and out of these needs have developed the vast variety and scope of the work projects.

The opponents of this public works program are those who object to its expense, who insist that a period of depression is not the best time to increase the capital plant of the nation. Unquestionable this type of work program costs considerably more than direct relief. A considerable part of the expenditures must go for materials, equipment, non-relief supervision, administration. Even though in general our policy has been to approve only such projects as would employ the greatest number of people, and require the least amount of materials, even though we have pursued a policy of employing hand labor as much as possible, and despite the fact that thousands of our projects, especially those carried on for the benefit of the non-manual and professional people, have involved little expenditure for materials and equipment, the truth must be admitted that the public works type of program is more expensive than the dole.
There may, however, be another method of work-giving which would involve less expenditure and yet usefully employ a large part of our needy unemployed. By this second and cheaper method one could put people to work producing the things they need and they would take the greater part of their pay in goods so produced, receiving only in cash sufficient to buy the things they could not produce, coffee, tea, pepper, oil, gasoline, transportation, and amusements, when not furnished by unemployed actors, musicians, and artists. It is estimated by specialists who have investigated the subject, that probably such a work program would cut relief costs in half. This is neither the time nor the place to enter into a more detailed discussion of this system of relief giving. The issues raised are too many and too complex for any rapid or superficial survey. It would offer one concrete advantage, however, in that it would without difficulty supply employment for the more than million workers in industry, who cannot easily be placed in our public works program. Whether such an imperium of the unemployed could exist within the larger imperio of private enterprise is a question to which, as yet, there is no answer.

In the other hand, it must be pointed out that this Imperium within an imperio does exist already, whether we like it or not, and will go on existing until the process of recovery will have wiped it out.

The jobless themselves have been among the first to recognize that fact with their Leagues of the Unemployed which everywhere come to think of themselves as representing a distinct and separate class in society. And behind our policy of work-giving, has been the desire to wipe out this distinction by putting every man in normal relation to his environment through steady and useful employment.

In any event, we are, for the present, committed to a policy of Work Assurance through public works; whether this method is more expensive than some other method of work or direct relief giving, is not now at issue.

Even before the Federal Emergency Administration came into being, while private agencies still imagined they could cope with the situation, there were attempts to give the unemployed jobs, in wood yards, repairing used clothing, in so-called make work. Then the situation rapidly outgrew the facilities of private organizations. The country had on its hands a vast mass of people who were unemployed and on relief—the kind of people that usually worked and always wanted to.

A number of cities claim the credit for having set up city work relief plans first. In the Federal office have never attempted to determine which it was. We do now, however, that by the time the Federal Emergency Relief Administration was formed the pattern of work relief was pretty well established. And the history
of FERA ever since could be summed up as a continuous effort to devise the best methods for providing jobs, so that as many people as possible might be given employment in the skills and trainings which they have been accustomed to practice. For we realized early that it was more harmful to a man's morale, to put him to work at a job he was not fitted for, to put a doctor of philosophy, or a mechanic to digging ditches, than to give him a dole, and let him remain idle.

When FERA first appeared on the scene, practically nothing at all was known about the people on relief; in June 1933 we did not even know how many were on relief; we certainly did not know how many of them were employable; we did not know anything about the occupational characteristics of those that were employable; or many carpenters, electricians, artists, writers, chemists, typists, surveyors here were. We had no accurate knowledge of the rural unemployment problem and that problem is one of our most difficult, and in this our situation differs from that almost all the industrial countries of Europe, which generally speaking, are not our particular type of rural destitution.

It took some pretty intensive surveys, for instance, to uncover the fact that thousands of so-called farmers on relief were actually by training or capacities not fit to be farmers at all, and that some other solution would have to be found for their difficulties, than merely giving them better land, financing their mortgages, and supplying them with stock and equipment. The stranded communities had to be studied in order to develop a solution for their special problem.

The study of urban populations revealed the fact, already referred to, that at least a million of the people on relief were industrial workers, and that therefore a purely construction program could not easily be adapted to their needs. You can see therefore, that an immense amount of research had to precede the development of a reasonably complete work program which would give every man and woman in need a job at he or she could undertake and work on usefully. Moreover, as our information concerning the occupational characteristics of our relief population we had, at the same time, to develop projects suited to the different categories of workers as they were separated out and classified.

The ingenuity of American engineers, sociologists, public agencies of all sorts, and the staff of our Work Division was taxed to the utmost to provide a sufficient variety of projects. As a beginning we have drawn up some 295 working procedures for an equal number of types of projects, to employ most of the known skills, and professions. In view of these facts it will become apparent at the President's announcement in January, that we were through with direct ro-
lief, and that we would give everyone of the three million five hundred thousand
employables on relief a job, did not by any means come as a new turn of policy,
but was the result of long preparation and planning.

Basically, procedure under the new Works Progress Administration, should
not be in essentials very different from what we have been doing during the past
year. At least some of the fundamental principles which grew up in that period
will, even if in somewhat modified form, be adhered to. One of those is that work
relief should not be made so attractive as to induce people to want to stay on
relief instead of taking jobs at their regular occupations as they turn up.

Under the Work Relief Program of the past year, a man’s pay and working
hours were calculated according to his minimum budgetary needs.

During the period that has just ended we had a simple and rather obvious
way of doing this. We let a man on work relief work only as many hours as were
necessary to give him the bare subsistence that he had to have to keep himself
alive and clothed. It was no wage of decency and comfort, no wage of luxury, it
was simply the amount of money that the social worker found the minimum necessary
to keep him on a bare subsistence level.

Under the new set-up we are able to do better than this. In return for
a fairly full week of work a man receives a security wage sufficient to meet the
average minimum needs of unemployed people belonging to his category of skill
and training. Nevertheless, the average worker will be glad to take a job in
private industry, whenever offered, because such a job will pay him consider-
ablely more when working a full week. The Works Progress Administrator has, how-
ever, been empowered to change our wage schedules whenever necessary to prevent
undue depression of wage rates in any particular district or region.

Another general principle that perhaps had better be characterized as
a general practice, is that machinery for good working conditions and industrial
relations shall be set up and maintained. This machinery, though somewhat modified,
will be continued, as will the organization for the hearing of complaints
in connection with working conditions.

Our careful and continuous program of safety education will be continued.
To those of you who are interested in safety, this is highly significant because
of the fact that it is the first time a nationwide effort to avoid accident and injury
has been made in an organized fashion within a single working organization.

Our program was and doubtless will continue to be a program of wide
scope and variety, but in the main, of a construction nature for the benefit of
the public — road building, flood control, rehabilitation of public buildings,
sanitation, extension of educational and recreational facilities. The work carried on has been of the broadest and most varied character. There is practically no type of construction that we have not undertaken. Most of the State Capitols were rehabilitated and redecorated by relief workers; waterworks and sewage systems, garbage disposal plants, irrigation ditches, hospital buildings, swimming pools, stadiums, athletic fields, these are but some of the routine construction jobs. We moved tracks for municipally owned street car lines; we rebuilt their street cars; in one naval station, we relaid several miles of railroad tracks. We have built and improved several thousand airports; we have completed one of the largest and most modern airplane hangars and administration buildings in the country.

It would be easier to say what we have not built than what we have. We even helped complete a skyscraper. Not so long ago we took over the rehabilitation of an entire city, which was, so to speak, on the broad line and which dumped itself into the lap of the Relief Administration for salvation.

Indeed, to be perfectly candid, this construction work exactly suited the American temperament and that is one reason why it developed. We are by nature a race of builders and engineers, even more so than were the Romans. We get the same thrill out of steel and concrete that perhaps a Frenchman gets out of a line painting. And then, we had such splendid technical resources at our command, we had to be working in our organization to get a full realization of the competence, eagerness, and efficiency of American engineers.

From actual construction work we proceeded quite logically to service projects which contributed similarly to the health and happiness of the public, and more particularly, of the unemployed. Just because they were unemployed, these millions of people needed special medical and health care; they also needed some added recreational and educational opportunities. The mere fact that a man is out of a job constitutes no good reason why he should sit around on a park bench and contemplate suicide. Indeed, he needs the distraction that a decent educational and recreational program offers much more than the man with a job.

So we developed special adult educational courses; gave the unemployed as well as the employed an opportunity to develop new skills. They had and still have classes for study and discussion of social problems. They are given opportunity to take up avocations, music, art, drama.

Here is where the unemployed white collar people had a chance at work; they have become the teachers, leaders and entertainers of the others. They teach
in the adult schools, are the ones who play in orchestras in free concerts, give performances of plays, paint pictures and murals for our public buildings. For the first time in our history, our government has become a patron of the arts, officially and quite unashamed.

It has been recognized that when an artist or musician is hungry he is just as hungry as a brick-layer and has the same right that a bricklayer has, to be employed at his own trade. In order to give the intellectuals further chance of employment we have put them to work collecting data of every kind and description, for the benefit of the research scientists. They not only have excavated Indian mounds, but also have pieced together the artifacts uncovered during the course of these excavations, and have properly labelled them and arranged them for exhibit in museums. They have compiled bibliographies on all sorts of topics for use by research students; they have examined thousands of blood smears through microscopes, for traces of disease, so that health authorities may have a better knowledge of how to cope with prevalent infections; they have been set to work making all sorts of surveys. Indeed most of the surveys carried on for the purpose of accumulating data for the proper development of our program have been made by the relief clients themselves.

Thousands of workers have been engaged in this task of accumulating data not only for relief administrations but also for research scientists and sociologists. For the first time in our history, perhaps, an attempt has been made to provide the professors with the workers they need for collection of this raw material of creative scientific research.

I suspect that human thought moves forward by progression of cycles of collection and of generalization. A lot of people with curiosity and energy collect a vast multitude of facts. When there is enough material at hand, then, by some obscure process, a great generalization may appear. Great scientific discoveries have always been preceded by periods of patient research and accumulation of facts. Galileo based his conclusions on the work of hundreds of obscure astronomers; Darwin's theories were based not only on his own investigations but also on those of botanists and zoologists who prepared the way for him.

More and more it is recognized that the great majority of scientists must be accumulators of data, which only the chosen few can interpret and synthesize for the benefit of humanity. The progress of science has been retarded by a lack of grubbers and dovers of facts; for the first time in modern history, perhaps, a reasonably adequate supply of such workers, from among the ranks of the people on relief, has been supplied. In a very unique way we have the present opportunity
collection of data. At this moment, in hospitals, schools, court houses, laboratories, libraries, in the open fields, the high mountains, the city streets and the rivers and swamps, are several hundred thousand relief workers noting information on questionnaires, bonding over books, microscopes, tabulating machines or charts, collecting, classifying and tabulating a huge quantity of data. It is the largest organization of human curiosity that has ever been affected in the world. It is not too much to assume that upon this multiple counting, numbering, and naming of things, may develop new generalizations that will advance the frontiers of human thought. Whether the people doing the counting, numbering, and naming will make the generalizations, is another matter—one of them may. But whoever makes the generalizations, it is these workers who are laying the groundwork for them.

Naturally, in most of the cities a good deal of the educational, social welfare and cultural work had already been carried on before the Relief Administration came into the field. We simply expanded and extended it, aiding already operating local agencies. But in the less highly developed rural districts the program came as something new and inspiring. There it had more than a quantitative value. In a number of states an enthusiastic campaign to wipe out illiteracy in the back country as well as in the slums, was undertaken.

Rural community centers were built by work relief employees and staffed by them, where women could come to discuss and learn about child hygiene, about proper nutrition for their children; rural visiting nursing services were established in many places. Extension library services to back-country districts were established. Books and magazines were contributed by people in the cities and sent out to isolated mountain settlement by what were known as bookmobiles, where there were no railroads, and by pack-horses, where there were no passable roads.

The forgotten men and women of these rural districts for the first time, perhaps, had a share in these health cultural, recreational and social welfare utilities that have hitherto, for the most part, been accessible only to city folk. This portion of the program we feel convinced has left a lasting impression on these communities and will not be dropped altogether when times grow better, once more, and the relief program is finally liquidated.

In the case of Nursery Schools the Relief Administration has been able to make a contribution to educational theory and practice that is unique. There have been set up under the Relief Administration procedure, about two thousand Nursery Schools in the past year. The whole pedagogy and theory of Nursery School and Infant Education is in a process of formation and this multiplying of the institu-
tions by ten within a year has created a groundwork for study of the habits of young children and of the relationship of nursery education to family life that we think will be a highly valuable contribution in its purely scientific aspects.

I have already referred to the policy of production for use by the unemployed, and I have pointed out that our program, past and present, is not specifically headed in this direction. However, force of circumstances to a certain extent has pushed us into a very limited number of production projects.

Before the drought, in practically every State, the unemployed were producing vegetables in individual or community gardens, consuming the produce according to their needs, and conserving the surplus. So now, when the program for disposal of drought cattle came along, meat canning proved to be only an extension of an activity that had been already pretty well developed.

In the same way, the proposal to consume 250,000 bales of surplus cotton resulted in the production in our work-rooms of mattresses and bedding for distribution among destitute families. We who have jobs and are in a position to replace, from time to time our household equipment, can hardly have any idea of what five years of destitution have done to the household goods of less fortunate people. When a glass gets broken in such a household, its loss proves simply irreparable. The old table that has been repaired times imnumerable, finally reaches a state of chronic instability and collapses. Blankets wear threadbare; bedding goes to pieces. There are any number of people sleeping or trying to sleep on bare slats or bed springs.

To meet these needs, household goods have on a very limited scale been turned out by the unemployed for distribution among the unemployed. The work has been done largely by hand or with very simple machines, so as to give jobs to as many people as possible. Actually, however, the great mass are still employed either on construction, or in the cultural, educational and service field.

The President's relief program is now entering its third year of operation; in all that period the people administering it have, under his direction, been feeling their way toward a more complete and effective method of giving all needy unemployed persons who are employable, jobs they are fitted by their training and skills to undertake. The point now seems to have been reached at which this aim can be realized in a pretty complete and carefully planned manner, and on a national scale, either through the agency of the Works Progress Administration or through other governmental agencies. Presently we are to have a true test of the possibilities and efficacy of such a program, perhaps for the first time in history. All other attempts to give relief through work have generally been of
a rather sporadic nature without sufficient consideration for the occupational characteristics of the unemployed, and without sufficient basis in statistical research and practical experience, and therefore have afforded little reliable material for discussion of the comparative merits of the Work Assurance and Subsistence Assurance methods of giving relief.

Certainly no work program of which we possess any records has ever been attempted on the vast scale and with such careful planning as the one now contemplated. Those of us who have had something to do with the administration of relief during those past two preparatory years, look forward with confidence to the new program's successful development; we feel that to give Work Assurance is the American way, the self-respecting way, both from the point of view of the people who still have regular jobs, and from the point of view of those who are to get the new jobs.

It is the democratic way, which tends, in so far as that is possible, to wipe out the difference between the man who has a regular job and the man who is on relief by a simple process of giving the man on relief a job as well; by virtue of this job he becomes part of the great American Commonwealth of useful and productive workers.