WPA PREPARES FLEXIBLE PROGRAM TO CUSHION EFFECTS OF EUROPEAN WAR

The Work Projects Administration is prepared to make rapid changes in both its volume of employment and its type of projects to cushion the effect of the European war on the United States, Howard O. Hunter, Deputy WPA Commissioner, announced today.

Preparation of a highly flexible program is based upon the assumption that certain industries in certain sections of the country may expand rapidly following the outbreak of war in Europe, and at the same time other industries may show a temporary decline. It is also anticipated, Mr. Hunter said, that improving prices of agricultural products may lessen the demand for WPA jobs in certain rural areas.

A sufficient reserve of approved projects is available, Mr. Hunter explained, to permit an immediate increase in WPA employment where the impact of war would increase unemployment and need. Many believe that unemployment in some industries may increase during the first few months following the outbreak of war, Mr. Hunter added, even though the long-range effect may be to provide more jobs in private industry.

Particular emphasis on WPA projects for the construction of public highways capable of meeting heavy traffic demands, improvement of airport facilities and possibly additional construction work for the Army and Navy to strengthen the national defense, was indicated in plans now under consideration by WPA, the Deputy Commissioner said.

Mr. Hunter also pointed out that the records of present and former occupations of nearly 2,000,000 now employed by WPA, and the additional hundreds of thousands who have been certified as eligible for such employment, will greatly facilitate the release of workers needed by private industries expanding as a result of this war.

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