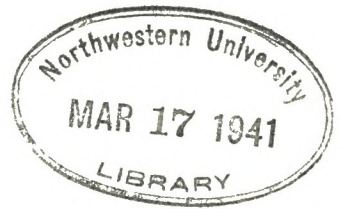


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ROOMFEDERAL WORKS AGENCY
WORK PROJECTS ADMINISTRATION

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HUNTER SAYS JOBS, NOT PAMPHLETS, MEET NATION'S NEEDS

The National Economy League, in its attack on WPA, is merely "trying to solve unemployment by a chart—with a line that goes off the page," Howard O. Hunter, Acting Commissioner of Work Projects, said today.

Predictions by the League that WPA employment will conflict with the defense program's demands by early next year, Hunter declared, are baseless suppositions that cannot be reconciled with industrial and employment surveys.

"We are interested in giving people jobs, not pamphlets," Hunter said. "The pamphlet of the Economy League is such a tissue of misstatements and prejudices that it is almost impossible to consider the charges seriously.

"Every time the Economy League calls for action I know what that means—another kick in the pants for the unemployed."

Mr. Hunter challenged the League to:

1. Name one place where a WPA worker refuses to accept a private job.
2. Name one place where industry cannot get sand, gravel, cement or other materials because of WPA orders.

As to the rate of pay on WPA, Mr. Hunter asserted that, "if any industry is paying less, somebody should investigate that industry.

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"Wages of WPA workers have been averaging \$56.50 a month--equivalent to \$678 a year. This is far below the average annual earnings in private industry. For example, the annual earnings as reported in the latest census of manufactures was \$1,152. The minimum paid by WPA, for unskilled workers in areas having the lowest living costs, is \$31.20 a month--equivalent to only \$374.40 a year."

Concerning predictions by the Economy League that WPA would interfere with the labor supply for defense industry, Mr. Hunter called attention to the concentration of this work in a few areas and asserted that there was no indicated labor shortage anywhere, except in a few highly skilled classifications rarely found on relief rolls. Three-fourths of defense contracts are in 20 industrial areas having less than a fifth of the total WPA employment, he pointed out.

"Even in Pittsburgh, the center of the steel industry," Mr. Hunter said, "the office of the State Employment Service had 46,380 registrants for jobs the first of this year. That was a decrease of only 1,720 from January, 1940, with the steel industry operating at practically full capacity and the output of steel ingots exceeding previous high levels. WPA rolls were lower by several thousand than in the previous winter, but approximately 10,000 were on the WPA "waiting list."

Replying to assertions that WPA has only a "slight" relation to the defense program, Mr. Hunter said approximately half a million of its workers are now employed on projects of direct value to defense. He called attention to the fact that approximately 85 percent of all airport improvements in recent years have been built by WPA.

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"Perhaps the best authorities on the value of WPA to national defense are the War and Navy Departments," Mr. Hunter concluded. "Letters from Henry L. Stimson, Secretary of War; Lewis Compton, Assistant Secretary of the Navy, and General George C. Marshall, Chief of Staff, pay tribute to our work in this line and are a matter of public record."

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