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UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE

THREE YEARS OF EMERGENCY RELIEF IN KENTUCKY 1932-1935

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Faculty

Of the Graduate School of the University of Louisville

In Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

of

Master of Science in Social Administration

by

Viola Miller Pryor

1938

NAME OF STUDENT: Viola Miller Pryor

TITLE OF THESIS: Three Years of Emergency Relief in Kentucky 1932-1935

NAME OF DIRECTOR: Dr. Margaret K. Strong

APPROVED BY A READING COMMITTEE COMPOSED OF THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS:

REPRESENTATIVE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH:

DATE: May 18, 1938

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ABBREVIATIONS

C.C.C., Civilian Conservation Corps.

C.W.A., Civil Works Administration.

F.E.R.A., Federal Emergency Relief Administration.

F.S.R.C., Federal Surplus Relief Corporation.

K.E.R.A., Kentucky Emergency Relief Administration.

K.R.C., Kentucky Relief Commission.

P.W.A., Public Works Administration.

R.F.C., Reconstruction Finance Corporation.

U.S.E.S., United States Employment Service.

W.P.A., Works Progress Administration.

THREE YEARS OF EMERGENCY RELIEF IN KENTUCKY 1932-1935

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

During the recent depression the relief of unemployment and economic distress has been a problem of national interest. The tremendous increase in the extent of need and the acceptance by the Federal Government of a substantial share of the responsibility for meeting this need have tended to focus thought on the administration of relief during the depression years and to stimulate interest in the issues involved.

This study was undertaken to assemble information concerning the early development of the emergency relief program in Kentucky and to interpret this development in the light of service rendered those in need. Its specific objectives have been to describe the extent of the problem; the development of the administrative programs which were formulated to meet the situation; the types of assistance provided; and to give as much perspective as possible to recent developments by viewing them in relation to long-time trends. Emphasis is placed on an analysis of policies and services, rather than on the mere recording of historical facts and statistical data in respect to costs and numbers on relief, data which are already a matter of public record.

An evaluation of the effectiveness of the various programs is concerned with the persons served, the standards of administration, the administrative set-up, and the attitude of the public toward these services. Therefore, this study limits itself to the facts of this kind and their interpretation.

Since this study deals with the emergency relief period as one phase of the public welfare program, the question naturally arises as to the significance of this period in influencing the development of a new philosophy of public welfare services. The necessity for widespread public relief was unknown to this country prior to the depression and any study of the emergency period arouses an interest in the fundamental question of whether the relief situation was attributable to depression factors alone, or to a long-time trend toward increasing poverty hastened by a changing social and economic order.

In 1932, there was already ample evidence of great need for relieving the distressed. Who were these persons to be served? What were their problems and what was their participation in the program? What were their rights in respect to public relief? Did the groups served have a voice in determining the policies of the program? Was the standard of relief adequate to meet their needs?

In considering administrative standards, questions naturally arise regarding the money that was available. From what sources was the money obtained? On what basis was it secured and what was the cost of administration? To what extent did the social services offered emerge from existing agencies to insure a social development in relation to the needs of the community? To what extent did the principle of social service impregnate the policies and to what extent was it lost in regimentation? Did uncorrelated administrative efforts cause confusion which proved costly and inefficient? To what extent was trained personnel available

in Kentucky and made use of to give leadership to a progressive program and to carry on the work in local communities?

Because of the extent and duration of the relief problem the attitude of the public was a factor in determining change. How did the public give evidence of interest and was there community participation in the emergency program? Did the present W.P.A. program emerge directly from the K.E.R.A. work program? How did federal leadership influence the Kentucky program? Between 1932 and 1935 was the foundation laid for a permanent public assistance program?

The study falls naturally into two periods; during the first period, from October, 1932, to November, 1933, the State Office was referred to as the Kentucky Relief Commission and marked the beginning of state recognition of its responsibility for a program of public assistance. In the second period, dating from November, 1933, and extending to December, 1935, federal participation was recognized and involved closer contacts and supervision.

Sources of information include statistical data and bulletins available to the public in the W.P.A. office, federal reports, interviews with persons associated with both the K.R.C. and the K.E.R.A., and personal observation. Emphasis has been placed throughout the report on the evolution and development of the emergency program, rather than on evaluating the effectiveness of one program as compared with another.

PUBLIC WELFARE PROBLEMS CONFRONTING KENTUCKY IN 1932

PUBLIC WELFARE PROBLEMS CONFRONTING KENTUCKY IN 1932

Until the present decade the gradual rise in relief costs over the years was a matter for state and local rather than national concern. But with the advent of the 1929 depression, relief costs throughout the country moved rapidly upward, exceeding local and state resources, thus focusing attention on the nation-wide problems of unemployment and the relief of distress caused by unemployment. The country was suffering from closed industries, cyclical unemployment, technological displacements, and inadequate wages. It also suffered from that great besetting fear of mankind - insecurity of the future.

Kentucky has long been considered an agricultural state. Of the more than 40,000 square miles of the state, it is said that more than 1,000 are "very fertile"; 22,000 "fairly fertile"; and 7,000 square miles are "very inferior."¹ More than one-half of the total acreage of the state comprises farm lands, and almost one-fourth is sowed in harvest crops, the most important of which are corn, tobacco, and hay - corn having by far the highest acreage and production, 5,000,000 tons² in 1929.

From 1929 to 1933, Kentucky wealth experienced great shrinkage.³ According to the Kentucky State Planning Board Report, there were net losses in assets in manufacturing and coal establishments of twenty-three and one-half million dollars in 1926 and about nineteen million

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1. "Report of the Kentucky State Planning Board," 1934, Chapter I, p. 23
 2. Ibid., p. 24
 3. Ibid., Chapter VII, p. 33

in 1933. Although comparable figures in terms of farm values are not available, the facts are so widely recognized that it seems scarcely necessary to produce statistical evidence.

The state-wide average per capita assessed valuation of all property was \$1,064.¹ It is notable, however, that while twenty-eight counties ranked above the average, ninety-two ranked below it. The extremes are of distinct interest; the per capita valuation of Woodford County, in the heart of the Bluegrass region, was \$3,857; the per capita valuation for Owsley County was \$207.

Tax levies averaged \$3.70 per person in 1930, but no less than ninety-four counties fell below the average. Five out of every twelve counties had a levy of less than \$2.00 per person; the lowest levy was \$0.57² while the highest was \$16.38³ per person.

It is thought that a low tax delinquency is apt to be associated with regions characterized by diversified industries and conservative fiscal policies. Conversely, high delinquencies tend to prevail in situations in which there is only a single local industry, or where the fiscal policies are unwise.⁴ From this point of view, it is of distinct significance that the average state-wide tax delinquency was eleven per cent, but even more significant that twenty-six counties had delinquencies higher than the average - one of them reporting more than

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1. Ibid., p. 25
 2. Ibid., Elliott County, p. 36
 3. Ibid., Woodford County, p. 36
 4. Ibid., p. 36

with the result that there were marked fluctuations in the volume of private relief. Since Kentucky, prior to 1933, had no state legisla-
¹
 tion for financing emergency unemployment relief, the burden fell upon the private agencies and local communities during these years. It became increasingly clear, however, that the localities could no longer bear the burden unaided.

As a result of concerted effort on the part of the unemployed, the private agencies and various local and state governments, Congress in July, 1932, passed the Emergency Relief and Construction Act which authorized the Reconstruction Finance Corporation to lend \$300,000,000 to states for relief purposes. The money was lent upon application of the governor and not more than fifteen per cent could be borrowed by any one state, the amount borrowed to be charged against the Federal Road
²
 Fund of each state. Title I of the Act provided that the funds made available by the R.F.C. be paid to the governor of the state and administered by him or under his direction, and upon his responsibility.

In accordance with this act, Governor Ruby Laffoon appointed the following members to serve as a Kentucky Relief Commission: Mr. William L. Sibert, Dr. Margaret K. Strong, Mrs. Fanniebell Sutherland, Mr. Atilla Cox, and Mr. Edward S. Jouette. He appointed Mr. Harper Gatton to serve as director, under his immediate direction.

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1. Lowe, Robert C., "F.E.R.A. Digest of State Legislation for the Financing of Emergency Relief," January 1, 1931 - June 30, 1935.
 2. By congressional action of June 18, 1934, states were relieved of any obligation to repay loans made under this act. Hence, federal participation in relief dates from the first loan from R.F.C. funds. Loans made to local subdivisions have not been waived.

sixty per cent. No less than sixty-nine counties reported tax delinquencies of more than twenty per cent.

In several counties the wealth and land were concentrated in the hands of the few. In Metcalf County, ninety per cent of the wealth was controlled by ten per cent of the population. Eighty per cent of the coal deposits of Letcher County belonged to private companies.

There was industrial unemployment caused by the closing of firebrick and tile factories in Carter and Rowan Counties; of railroad shops in Breckinridge, Estill, and Fulton Counties; of a shoe factory in Franklin County; of a chair factory in McLean County; and of the Armco Baking Powder Company in Greenup County. The trotting industry in Fayette County and the raising of stock for racing purposes greatly decreased causing unemployment of a large percentage of the negro population.

As the depression grew more acute, demands for relief increased sharply and the need for meeting the unemployment crisis was evident. The problem was not confined to any one section of the state or to any special group and by 1932 it was clear that definite plans must be made for some form of public assistance.

The important role played by the private social agencies in the winter months of 1930, 1931, and 1932, cannot be over-emphasized. Existing private agencies and newly-created emergency committees in many sections of Kentucky made a substantial effort to meet the increasing relief needs but the voluntary contributions collected in emergency relief drives were expended over comparatively short periods of time

The Kentucky Relief Commission resigned as a body three weeks after its appointment, in protest against the political administration demanded by the governor. The name of Kentucky Relief Commission was retained, however, throughout the administration of Mr. Gatton, although in fact there was no commission to represent the interest of the public.

STATE ORGANIZATION PRIOR TO THE EMERGENCY PROGRAM

STATE ORGANIZATION PRIOR TO THE EMERGENCY PROGRAM

In order to understand fully the situation in Kentucky during this period, in regard to public welfare, it might be well to see to what extent the State Department was organized to meet public needs. In 1932 we find the department a lineal descendant of the Board of Trustees of the State House of Reform, created by law in 1893; the Board of Penitentiary Commissioners, 1898; the State Board of Control for Charitable Institutions, 1906; the State Board of Control, 1918; and the State Board of Charities and Corrections, 1920. The law of 1932 created the State Department of Public Welfare, but its duties were essentially those of the former Board of Charities and Corrections.¹

This Act of 1932 provided for a Board to be known as the "Department of Public Welfare" to consist of five members appointed by the Governor for overlapping terms of four years each. Only one member of the Board of Charities and Corrections was retained on the new Board of the Department.

The functions of the Board, continuing those of its predecessor, included attention to all problems of crime, delinquency, and dependency, supervision of State supported and State aided institutions of a charitable or correctional nature, and direct control and management over the seven principal State institutions. In actual practice, the work of the Board was limited to the administration of these institutions, including parole matters, and little attempt was made to exercise the powers granted for more general direction of a State public welfare program.

1. Griffenhagen and Associates, "Audit and Survey of the D.P.W.", Commonwealth of Kentucky, January 15, 1934.

The so-called Administrative Reorganization Act of 1934 placed the Kentucky Children's Bureau within the Department of Public Welfare, but any intended realignment was only nominal, as both agencies continued to function exactly as before. No constructive program of child welfare involving county organization was attempted.

The law centralized responsibility and made possible a strong supervising office but was weak in its provisions for the actual exercise of administrative functions. A great weakness of the new provisions was their failure to provide for a competent executive officer. Instead of centralizing responsibility, they encouraged decentralization within the board and the undermining of definite lines of authority by the members who, feeling obliged to earn their salaries, interested themselves in minor details. Complete control of the administration was, of course, vested in the Governor because of his authority to name the chairman annually. At best, this clearly presaged difficulties in securing continuity.

The state had no merit system for the selection of personnel and technical qualifications were usually secondary to other considerations in selection of employees for the state institutions. Neither the board members nor their employees had training or extensive experience in the knowledge or skills of institutional administration or in modern methods of caring for the problems presented by the population of the various institutions.

The Department of Public Welfare made no attempt to administer all the state public welfare activities, and in fact the functions which

were carried on had little correlation within the department. The chief interest of the board centered about institutional care, especially aiming at a low cost of operation. The construction and equipment at the institutions indicated that the board considered cheapness in first cost the principal means of economy open to it, and while attempting to comply strictly with the demand to cut expense it worked hardships upon several of the institutions and greatly restricted their usefulness.¹

The State Department at this time offered no stimulus to local communities in the promotion of programs of Public Welfare. When the Louisville Department of Public Welfare was created in 1930, it had no connection with the State Administration; this department was the first in the state to promote a work program for the unemployed and relief granted was in the form of cash until it began to participate in the state emergency program in January, 1933, when it was forced to issue "scrip."

Although the State Department was empowered by law to supervise all public welfare activities, we find it inactive in this respect in 1932. Consequently, it is not surprising that the emergency program was set up independently of the department and without regard for a broader interpretation of public welfare services. The establishment of the Kentucky Relief Commission on October 6, 1932, in fact, marked the beginning of a program which looked toward a sharing of responsibility by all three levels of government - local, state, and federal.

1. Ibid.

KENTUCKY RELIEF COMMISSION (1932-1933)

ORGANIZATION

KENTUCKY RELIEF COMMISSION (1932-1933)

ORGANIZATION

The State Office of the K.R.C. began its operations with headquarters in Louisville. In addition to the director and his two associates, the original staff consisted of seven field supervisors and fifty nine clerical workers. For the most part, the clerical jobs were given to those who represented themselves to be in need and the general office personnel, for a period, was paid in Merchant Supply Orders, commonly referred to as "scrip." Throughout the program, great emphasis was placed upon need, rather than ability, in appointments to the staff and consequently the number of employees in the State Office mounted steadily.

From the outset, the state program was highly centralized. Each individual Merchant Supply Order issued in the one hundred and twenty counties eventually found its way to the State Office for accounting purposes; each clerical and social procedure originated in the State Office; each member of the county staff and each member of the county committee had to have the approval of the State Office; rates for work relief wages were set at headquarters without regard for local conditions. In urban areas there was resistance to the use of scrip, (1) because the client found it impractical, and (2) because the public official found administrative costs rising as a result of the system. Despite public disapproval of the plan, the use of scrip was compulsory. It was inevitable that bitter criticism and general lack

of understanding on the part of the community would follow such a super-imposed and highly centralized system of relief administration.

During the early months, emphasis was placed upon work relief and only in exceptional cases was direct relief provided. This was done in order to limit the program to unemployment relief and to emphasize the intention that federal funds should supplement and not supplant local funds and local programs. In accordance with this policy, the State Office reserved the right to refuse reimbursement for expenditures¹ which were properly the responsibility of local agencies.

In October, 1932, the first month of the program, approximately one hundred thousand families applied for aid through the officials of the fifty-three counties requesting governmental assistance. By January, 1933, forty-three additional counties and the City of Louisville had applied for assistance; and by November of that year all but² Jefferson and Shelby Counties were receiving financial aid.

At the close of the Gatton regime one year later, the final audit, dated September 30, 1933, revealed that \$8,764,149.34 had been spent during the program, \$477,404.96 of the total, or 5.4 per cent for administrative costs. In view of the early policy of issuing Merchant Supply Orders in payment of clerical services, the figures given for administrative costs can be considered only as an approximation of the real costs.

1. K.R.C. Bulletin #1, October 17, 1932.

2. With the beginning of the C.W.A. program in November, 1933, these two counties applied for assistance, making the emergency program state-wide in scope.

THE COUNTY PLAN

THE COUNTY PLAN

1

The county was the unit of administration. The relief office was usually located in the county seat, frequently in the County Court House, and the space provided was generally none too adequate. The minimum staff consisted of a County Relief Worker, a Disbursing Officer, and such stenographic and clerical assistance as was required.

The administration of relief was under the direction of a committee known as the County Relief Committee which was responsible to the State Office. It recommended the personnel necessary to carry out the work and had general supervisory power over the local staff, subject to the direction of the State Director and his field staff. All local personnel was "nominated" by the County Relief Committee and appointed by the State Director.

Each County Relief Committee consisted of five persons, residents of the county and recognized in the community for their leadership qualities. The committee was elected at a town meeting to which the public was invited.

To prepare for the selection of a County Committee, the field supervisors interviewed certain key men in the community prior to the public meeting. The object of the preliminary interview was to gain any available information which would lead to the appointment or nomination or election of only desirable members of the committee and staff.

1. Geographically. There was no connection with the county fiscal court.

After a County Relief Committee had been elected, a private session was held so that the committee might be charged with specific duties and given certain information and instructions. At the meeting, a staff consisting of one Relief Worker and one Disbursing Officer was named, and if possible, their willingness to accept made known. Official approval of the committee and the staff was given later by the Director, in writing.

Although the committee was vested with executive authority it usually acted merely in an advisory capacity. It had to conform to the rulings of the State Office and be guided by the information supplied by the Relief Worker. Its chief functions were to represent the State Office in the county, interpret the aims and purposes of the Administration and carry out the rules and regulations under which they were governed and to advise regarding care of relief in respect to difficult cases. Regular meetings were held to consider the needs and the administration of the work in the county. The chairman of the committee received copies of all instructions sent to the Relief Worker.

The duties of the Relief Worker were to establish eligibility for those in need; set up the county office for the taking of applications and continuance of the relief program; organize the staff; train the home visitors; acquire knowledge of general conditions in the county, both social and industrial; interpret this information to the committee, the community, and the State Office. In addition, the Relief Worker was expected to make as many home visits as possible, block the county into geographical divisions to facilitate home investigations, supervise home visitors and make final decisions regarding relief. If the

application was approved, the client was notified and if rejected the client was supposed to be given full explanation. The Relief Worker was also responsible for the efficiency of the office and for compiling such statistics and reports as were required by the committee and the State Office.

The Disbursing Officer was responsible for issuing MSO's at the direction of the Relief Worker; for keeping an accurate accounting of all funds spent; and for carrying out all the bookkeeping and accounting details required by the State Office; the purchase of supplies, contacts with merchants and individuals who might violate the rules in connection with the receipt of MSO's and for interpreting the county relief work to the committee and the State Office.

The allocation of funds to the counties was made monthly by the State Office on the basis of the budget of need submitted by the county committee. Counties whose expenditures exceeded their anticipated needs met the deficit without aid from the Commission. This state policy caused a great deal of friction between the localities and the state because it was exceedingly difficult to estimate needs in the height of a depression and the allotment of state funds was so frequently delayed that many counties did not know the amount of the county grant until after their expenditures had been made.

Specific and minute instructions were given to the counties regarding the use, value, and compilation of the case record. This was essential in view of the large number of inexperienced and untrained workers in the county offices. In addition to the identifying and

social information to be obtained, instructions were given as to the filing, numbering, and the confidential nature of records under their care. Obviously, it was impossible to keep satisfactory case records with the untrained and inexperienced group employed.

The determining of social service policies constituted a problem from the beginning. The need for trained personnel both for administrative and case work service was great. There is little evidence that any special effort was made to set up standards of qualifications for the staff. Broad statements were made regarding qualifications, such as, "The County Relief Worker must be a well-educated, alert person, understanding of the troubles of persons in need, and having a sense of responsibility for their social welfare as well as for the careful expenditure of funds. Whenever possible, this person should be a trained social worker particularly in the counties where there is a large number of applicants and it is necessary to use a considerable number of assistants, either paid or volunteer. The Disbursing Officer should be competent in the accounting of funds and the keeping¹ of financial and statistical records." As there were few professional social workers in the state at this time, it is not surprising that the counties did not realize the need of professional standards and that very little, if anything, was done to secure trained workers.

1. K.R.C. Bulletin #1, October 17, 1932.

THE WORK RELIEF PROGRAM

THE WORK RELIEF PROGRAM

Relief in the form of work was provided for able-bodied persons. This form of relief was advocated in order to preserve the independence and work habits of the unemployed; to discourage those who wished to live without work; and to obtain for the community many useful projects which it could not otherwise undertake. Theoretically, the amount of work allotted to a man depended upon the needs of his family - enough work being allowed to cover needs. Where the need was extraordinary, because of the size of the family, sickness, or other causes, the wage-earner was given a few days of work relief each week and his additional needs were met by direct relief. County workers were requested to send men to work in the cold and wet weather only when they were properly clothed and physically able to work.

The question of wage rates was a recurrent one throughout the emergency program. The wage rate first established was \$1.50 per day but was reduced to \$1.00 per day on March 3, 1933, because of the banking situation throughout the state and the needs of farmers. August 1, 1933, saw another change in the rate, for in compliance with F.E.R.A. rules and regulations governing work relief, projects were placed on an hourly basis - the rate of pay being 30¢ per hour.

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1. KRC Bulletin #4, October 24, 1932.
 2. Bulletin dated March 3, 1933. The exception being Louisville which had an established work relief program on a 35¢ an hour basis.

In counties which did not employ a County Road Engineer, the County Relief Committee was permitted to recommend for employment a work project officer who had charge of locating, planning, and carrying out work projects subject to the approval of the State Executive office. His work included making arrangements with the County Judge or the Fiscal Court for material and machinery, and transportation of men from points near their home to the work projects if the distance was great. He selected sub-foremen to represent him on the job and made reports to the committee and the State Director.

The work projects undertaken were upon public property or upon property of tax free institutions or for the purposes of public welfare. Projects advocated were those that would absorb the greatest number of men, such as road building, repair and clean-up work in Court Houses and school buildings, parks, etc. The State Board of Health actively assisted in planning projects which looked toward the raising of sanitary standards throughout the state.

A garden program was launched in the early part of 1933 on the basis of "no garden - no relief." In counties not employing a farm agent, a garden supervisor was employed to carry out the program. Sub-supervisors were selected from the relief rolls to assist with the program. Uniform seed packages containing potatoes, onion sets, tomato and cabbage plants, corn, beans, and peas were given to the clients on relief or to the so-called "borderline" cases. The cost

of the program was \$378,000 and the Director claimed a return in food-stuffs considerably in excess of this amount.

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1. Courier Journal, August 13, 1933, "Mr. Gatton Tells of Relief Program."

THE MERCHANT SUPPLY ORDER

THE MERCHANT SUPPLY ORDER

One of the first policies decided upon by the K.R.C. was the issuance of Merchant Supply Orders, as a procedure for the distribution of relief funds. This "uncontrolled order," as it is commonly known in other states, supposedly had the client's purchases written in by the merchant on the reverse side of the voucher at the time of purchase. That it was subjected to much abuse is unquestioned because merchants wishing to retain the trade of the client gave him the commodities requested, regardless of the limitations imposed by the State Office, and it was frequently charged that clients were given cash for the order if willing to accept a considerable discount. Merchants disliked the use of vouchers because it entailed a long period of waiting before checks were received from the K.R.C. for the merchandise sold, and the client disliked its use because it prevented "shopping" and buying at stores where the prices were best. It was a bane to the relief office because of the complicated form and the breaking down of the one order into four or five, should the client request an order for different commodities, such as, food, light, fuel, clothing, rent, and shoes. This was his privilege if the MSO was to serve him adequately but it worked untold hardship on the larger relief agencies. In Louisville, especially, its use was protested by both the client and the public agency, for since 1930 work relief had paid on a cash basis and the return to a voucher was considered a backward step.

A study of the accounting procedure shows clearly some of the problems that would naturally arise from such an involved system. The MSO's were issued in triplicate. The original was given to the client who exchanged it for commodities and the merchant sent it to the State Office for payment. The duplicate remained in the county office and was entered on duplicate journal sheets. The triplicate and the original journal sheet were sent to the State Office.

Triplicate MSO's were checked in the State Office. The check was as to the amount and was made against the journal sheets. The triplicates were filed numerically by counties in boxes. The journal sheets were added and entered in a Commitment Journal. The county office was notified of corrections. A form (known as Form 7) went into the State Office with the MSO's attached. The State Office stamped the date upon them and attached work slips indicating retail or wholesale assignments. The Forms 7 were filed in boxes by the dates received, then referred to the Itemizing Department. The Itemizing Department checked four items: signatures on Forms 7 and MSO's; names of counties on Forms 7 and MSO's; acknowledgements; and itemizations. Assignments were grouped. The signatures of merchants on Forms 7-A were then checked with signatures on MSO's.

The State Office next added the MSO's, comparing the total with that on Forms 7 or 7-A. Triplicate copies of the MSO's were checked and the amounts compared. The MSO's were checked for the signatures. Deductions were made for any differing sums. Next the triplicates were added and checked with Forms 7 or 7-A, and finally the Forms 7 were authorized for payment.

Meanwhile the state had set up a Field Voucher Auditing Department. Field vouchers covering all county and state administrative expense were sent to that Department, where a record was kept of every person on the payroll in the county. Dates and amounts were checked against the last voucher paid.

The vouchers next were sent to the Check Writing Department for payment. Here the checks were typed, perforated, and checked with Forms 7 or 7-A, and here they received a final authorization. They were next signed by machine. Vouchers were then stapled to Form 7, and sent to the Bookkeeping Department in numerical order. Here they were entered in the cash book numerically and then sorted by counties. They were posted to subsidiary county ledgers, and the ledgers balanced at the end of each month with cash book controls.

In later years a few minor changes were made in the system but for the most part, the same costly, highly centralized control of disbursements persisted throughout the emergency program.

The nature of the MSO was little understood by the Executives, themselves, for, in the early days, these vouchers were used to pay for all clerical services in the County Relief Offices, and for some expenditures in the State Office - January and February, 1933, showing an expenditure of \$26,920.92 for clerical services in this form. The expenditure thus made was considered as relief and not as overhead. In the final report of the director, attention was called to the fact that the total county overhead expense for the entire period of one year had been four per cent of the total expenditures and the

state headquarters' expense had been one and four tenths per cent of the total expenditures. This apparent though not real economy in administration naturally misled the uninformed public as to the efficiency of the administration.

THE KENTUCKY EMERGENCY RELIEF ADMINISTRATION

(1933-1935)

THE KENTUCKY EMERGENCY RELIEF ADMINISTRATION (1933-1935)

Under the R.F.C., relief was considered a local responsibility even though federal monies went into the state to assist in caring for the unemployed. Under this arrangement, federal responsibility ceased with the granting of the loan. Obviously, while the money was on a loan basis, the Federal Government could not dictate terms of adequacy in respect to the relief grant or policies or standards of personnel administration. Then, too, the amount loaned was subject to political pressure and regardless of the state's need, the governor best gifted in making appeals received the largest appropriation.

The R.F.C. experience demonstrated the need for federal supervision. The country at large was not conscious of social needs and practices and with huge sums going into the states, some measure of supervision and guidance was essential. In many socially backward states relief policies were ruinous to individual welfare; eligibility for relief was determined according to repressive principles and frequently artificially in an effort to control costs. In many instances officials advocated publicizing names of relief recipients in order to penalize the client and make relief unattractive.

It was such policies as these that the Federal Government sought to control by the passage of the Federal Emergency Relief Act of May, 1933. The federal allotment to the states became not a loan but a direct appropriation, subject, however, to certain regulations and controls laid down by the federal agency. According to the rules and

regulations of the F.E.R.A., federal grants were to be administered by public agencies; were to be adequate and based upon budgetary requirements; and under the supervision of trained and experienced workers. The program was limited to those whose employment or available resources were inadequate to provide the necessities of life for themselves or their dependents and excluded, as state or local responsibilities, relief for widows, aged persons, institutional care, and the¹ cost of the boarding out of children.

Although, officially, the K.R.C. ceased to exist with the passage of the Federal Emergency Relief Act on May 22, 1933, the State Office continued to function under the name, Kentucky Relief Commission, until November 9, 1933, when it became known as the K.E.R.A.

At this time, the responsibility of federal authority was acknowledged; and a new administrator, Mr. Thornton Wilcox, was appointed with an advisory committee made up of : Dr. Charles W. Welch, Mr. S. French Hogue, Mr. George R. Hunt, Dr. William J. Hutchins, Mr. Paul Morton, Judge C. S. Nunn, Mr. Noel Bush, and Judge S. S. Willis. The personnel of this committee of leading citizens, however, did not prove permanent and resignations and new appointments were recurrent.

The newly appointed administrator assumed control almost simultaneously with the inception of the Civil Works Program. Because of its magnitude, this program claimed his entire attention until April, 1934, when it was abandoned, and he had little opportunity to study the direct relief administration.

1. F.E.R.A Rules and Regulations #3 - July 11, 1933

The C.W.A. was created in November, 1933, by Executive Order from Washington to provide regular work at the prevailing local wage to four million unemployed, only half of whom were to be taken from the relief rolls. It was planned for the three winter months in the hope that it would not only fill the gap by giving the Public Works Administration an opportunity to get its wheels in motion but would give an impetus to normal recovery.

In Kentucky, as in the other states, a maximum thirty hour week and a maximum eight hour day were established for all Civil Works employees at manual labor; no children under sixteen years of age were permitted to work on the project; and human labor was used in lieu of machinery wherever practicable and consistent with sound economic and public advantage. Kentucky, being in the Central Zone, was permitted to pay \$1.10 per hour for skilled labor and \$.45 per hour for unskilled labor. Under this program, Kentucky received \$9,943,756.43 from the Federal Government for the relief of the unemployed.

ORGANIZATION

ORGANIZATION CHART
K.E.R.A.
JUNE 1934

ORGANIZATION

A study of the organization chart of K.E.R.A. reveals glaring weaknesses: instead of a pyramid based upon the clients, the counties, and the areas, rising to a peak with a few carefully selected executives at the top, with lines of authority and responsibility well-defined, the chart presents a square. The administrative mechanisms at the top are almost as numerous as the service units at the bottom. The Administrator retained direct responsibility for an enormous range of bureaus, departments, and divisions, each of which was responsible to him alone. He retained direct control over persons engaged in every phase of the program. The director of rural rehabilitation, the statistician, the director of transient service, the director of the work department, the director of field operations, and the comptroller were alike directly responsible to the State Administrator. An office manager, an auditor, an auditing staff, a disbursing staff, and an accounting staff, theoretically responsible to the comptroller, were in practice, responsible through him to the State Administrator. The director of field operations was, again, responsible directly to the State Administrator. His field staff was composed of district auditors, district supervisors, and district engineers. The engineers, however, owed their authority quite as much to the director of the work division as to him. A similar relationship existed between the district auditors and the comptroller.

The same confusion existed with regard to the area organization. The areas comprised from two to five counties each, with an average of three, and were supposedly under the supervision of an Area Board which was made up of two representatives from each county committee within the region. Few understood clearly the relationship of the Area Board to the County Committee and to the relief offices and consequently these committees gradually became nonexistent.

The Area Administrator was under the direction of the State Administrator. He supervised and coordinated all the unemployment relief activities in a region composed of several counties. He supervised in a general way the work of the county work director, the case work field supervisor, the county work supervisor, the field engineer, rural rehabilitation supervisors, and traveling account clerks; coordinated where necessary the work of all such individuals within the region; interpreted policies of the State Office; made decisions regarding special cases and situations; was responsible for reports to the state director on special problems of the region requiring attention of the State Office; and advised the state director upon better methods of promoting the efficiency of the program within the region. The minimum qualifications for the position were described as: either (1) training in a professional school of social work, or education equivalent to that represented by graduation from a college or university of recognized standing with at least a minor in social science and two years of successful business experience, or (2) any other equivalent

combination of education and experience; knowledge of the activities of public and private welfare organizations and of community organizations; supervisory ability; sympathetic understanding of the problems of relief clients; and the ability to get along well with others.¹ The salary range for this position was from \$175.00 to \$225.00 per month.

In areas with a caseload of 1500 or over the plan of the State Office was to place a trained social worker as the Area Relief Supervisor. In some of the areas with a caseload under 1500 the strongest and best trained relief worker was made Area Relief Supervisor. In a number of instances where the caseload was small, the Area Relief Supervisor was also the Area Administrator.

In point of fact, the Area Relief Supervisor (usually a woman) had a dual responsibility, in that she was responsible both to the Area Administrator and to the Social Service Division of the State Office. She supervised the county relief workers in the administration of relief to promote efficiency, economy, and proper regard for the welfare of the client; held weekly staff meetings in each county, at which time State bulletins were read and discussed, problem cases studied, and work planned; established cooperative relationships with county officials and local welfare agencies; and assisted in securing competent personnel on the county relief staff.

1. K.E.R.A. Bulletin, July 26, 1934

The county relief worker was in charge of the local office. It was her responsibility to direct the county, supervise the home visitors, make the final decision as to the amount of relief, see that visits to relief families were made monthly, conduct staff meetings for the purpose of instructing the home visitors in regard to relief standards, methods and procedures. The importance of records was increasingly emphasized and it was the duty of the county relief worker to see that the record conformed to the following outline:

1
OUTLINE FOR RECORDING FIRST INTERVIEWS

- I. Date of application and calls with last name of visitor.
- II. Manner and Appearance
 - a. Attitude and general appearance of important members of family
 - b. Any unusual traits evidenced
 - c. Standard of living.
- III. Residence
 - a. Facts regarding legal residence of Man
 - b. Previous addresses and length of time lived there.
- IV. Neighborhood and Home
 - a. Kind of neighborhood
 - b. Type of home - size, number of rooms, furnishings, etc.
 - c. Living conditions - overcrowded?
 - d. Heating and cooking arrangements if at all significant.
- V. Property
 - a. Purchase
 - b. Mortgage
 - c. Taxes - arrears.
- VI. Children: a few identifying remarks about them, pointing out unusual traits or abilities, schools attended, etc.

VII. Health. .

VIII. Social History

- a. Any significant material regarding the family history that was brought out in the interviews
- b. Church
- c. Club or other organization affiliations
- d. War Service
- e. Reports of other social agencies and Court Records.

IX. Relatives.

X. Employment

- a. List 3 employers of each working member of the household (employer's address, length of employment, department, type of work, average earnings)
- b. Any type of work for which Man or woman is fitted.

XI. Finances

- a. Debts
- b. Insurance
- c. Rent
- d. Income
- e. How did they manage so far

XII. Budget or Plan

- a. Include all expenses, indicate what source (family, relatives, Emergency Relief, and others) is to be responsible for each item.

XIII. Disposition

- a. Relief given
- b. Final plan.

With so complex an organization, it was natural that there should be numerous uncertainties in respect to staff relationships. It was difficult to know where authority lay. Examples were numerous in which the county relief worker reached one conclusion, the area administrator or one of his subordinates reached another, the field supervisor agreed with one or the other, and the ultimate decision was left somewhere between the director of field operations and some entirely different department head, such as the Director of Social Service.

The place of the Social Service Department in the administrative set up is perhaps a clue to the whole administrative confusion. Instead of recognizing that social service is the principle of all public welfare administration, the K.E.R.A. made the Social Service Department simply an adjunct to the larger administrative organization. The Social Service Department included, besides a director, also a director of training, a case work consultant, a consultant in medical care and a consultant on nutrition and budgets, who went into the field, and in characteristic confusion operated upon administrative aspects of the problem. That is to say, training and the special functions were superimposed upon the social work program in the field, where already there were such marked administrative weaknesses that no superimposition could have remedied them.

The organization chart shows the tendency to add a new director whenever a new problem presented itself. The oftener it was done, the more necessary it became to continue it. For example, the field operations department, which would naturally have assumed the functions of training and special consultants' work, was unfitted because of lack of a social service background to do so. Thus, the director of social service was employed. When the subsistence garden program was instituted neither the social service department, nor the field organization staff, which had been set up without any particular regard for the problems which it was to face, was fitted to tackle the program; hence, a director of subsistence gardens was appointed. Commodity distribution followed much the same course. There was much surplus food available

for quick distribution and the field staff was inadequate for the purpose. The Social Service Department had no county embodiment; hence, a director of commodity distribution. In any sound organization, the field staff, comprising skilled social service workers, would have supervised the coordination of records and the correlative work of social investigation involved in the student program. In Kentucky, however, an "emergency education coordinator" was appointed.

Thus, we see that the organization of relief in Kentucky during this early period was a mechanism heavy at the top, and light and weak at the bottom. The overlapping of functions, the misinterpretation of responsibility, together with the refusal of the directors to delegate authority, completed the picture of faulty organization which tended to produce faulty administration. A basic disregard for the first principles of public administration combined with unawareness of the fact that public welfare is essentially a social work program calling for highly developed professional skills resulted in an administration which at great cost and amid much confusion made very slow progress toward establishing a service which under other auspices might have laid the foundation for a permanent public welfare program in the state.

ADMINISTRATION

ADMINISTRATION

Despite the elaborate organization, the administration of the K.E.R.A. was poorly geared to client needs. As customarily happens when there are too many specialists operating at the top, the program became a mechanism with emphasis on specialties rather than a program to serve families and individuals. Frequent staff conferences and dictatorial administration by the director did not successfully overcome this defect. Confusion regarding organization produced vagueness of responsibility on the part of local and intermediate staffs. The administrative difficulties originating in the horizontal form of organization were characterized by a multiple division of single functions among the state, the district, the area, and the county units.

The multiplicity of administrative units in itself constituted an administrative problem: 1 state, 6 districts, 30 areas, and 120 counties - 156 units in all. This large number of units increased administrative costs and added to the confusion.

Then, too, the K.E.R.A. program in its broader aspect was not founded on clearly defined public welfare principles. It represented an attempt to operate unrelated programs without a clear conception of the social philosophy involved. Primary policies were not formed with the fundamental purpose of rehabilitation and the relief of the distressed but rather for the purpose of furthering specialized programs. Policies were superimposed by the State Office, were often contradictory, incomprehensive, and failed in their purpose to adjust procedures to client needs. The county workers rarely had explained to

them the policies behind the orders and bulletins which meant that they, as well as the clients, were completely at a loss regarding the true intent of the program.

While there were some county offices properly equipped for the administration of the relief program, there were many that were highly unsuitable. In some counties the offices were so small that the entire staff could not be housed at one time; in some there was no privacy, especially when the office was shared with the county attorney or other county officials; in some the staff paid the office rent; in some the staff paid for the lights and heat; and in some the equipment had been lent by the employees.

The philosophy behind the social work of the K.E.R.A. is difficult to determine. With so much emphasis placed upon the building up of mechanisms, the operation of special units, and incidental tasks of administration, it is not surprising that the tragic realities in the clients' lives were so little regarded. Attitudes, as revealed by contact with state and local officials, were based on the assumption that relief recipients were personally inadequate and there was no real appreciation of the struggle most of the clients were making, often against unsurmountable odds and with slight hope of success. A public welfare program calls for universal provision of standards and curative treatment where the life or work habits are not socially acceptable, but too often punishment patterns governed relief giving and applicants are excluded from the program because they were considered unworthy.

The adequacy of relief was a problem throughout the emergency program. Kentucky accepted a subsistence standard of relief and because of limited funds was unable to provide budgetary needs even on this subsistence level. Although it is a basic principle of modern social work that relief should be determined upon the basis of a budgetary deficit, this method was not established in Kentucky. Even though the K.E.R.A. had employed a home economics assistant in every area, a practicable simple budget was not generally in use at the close of the program.

There was, to be sure, a very complex and formidable schedule for constructing a budget, which many counties could not use because of its very complexity. In even more counties, there was no conception of its use and, consequently, although a budget was regularly constructed for every family, nothing was subsequently done with it. Frequently, as little as ten to twenty per cent of the budgetary food deficits of the clients was furnished by the organization and rarely was as much as fifty per cent issued.

Even in instances where the workers had determined how much the families needed, the allocation to the county was too small to provide it. Various means were adopted to effect an equitable distribution of the limited allocations. In some counties, the budgetary deficit was disregarded, and a scale, representing the rough sense of justice of the relief worker, was substituted for it. In other counties, a differential was applied to every budgetary deficit, with the result that every family received from twenty-five to forty per cent of its established budgetary needs.

When no budgetary deficit was established, the workers usually relied upon a "common sense" determination. They attempted to relate the need of the client to the allocation of funds allowed the county each month, which were in constant conflict. For example, one record revealed that the relief worker believed that the family would need, for food only, between \$20.00 and \$25.00 per month; but that, on the basis of the September allocation of funds to the county, he would be able to give but \$5.40 per month in work relief or \$3.00 in direct relief.

Another distressing policy was the serious and widespread failure to allow immediate or "emergency" relief at the point of intake. In most instances the family in dire need was instructed at the intake desk to secure credit. The use of this old and questionable method almost invariably meant that the family was being requested to secure an additional loan from neighbors or relatives who, themselves, more often than not, were on relief. This procedure, in many instances, made it necessary for county relief officials, and interested individuals, to supply the emergency need.

There was little understanding on the part of the county workers as to which group was to receive work relief and which was to receive direct relief. The chief difficulty was the county worker's concept of work relief. Some of the misconceptions can be traced to the State Headquarters where a bulletin was issued to the effect that budgets for work relief families were to be met as nearly adequately as possible, while budgets for direct relief families could not be met

adequately. The State Office further urged that many direct relief cases be assisted by their own earnings, or by the Fiscal Court.¹

There was widespread discontent on the part of the leading citizens in rural counties who believed that the \$.30 per hour paid to relief labor was too high and should be reduced to \$.20 or less per hour. This group contended that the relief rate could not be equalled by local employers for years to come, and that its influence was restricting opportunities for supplementary earnings by the clients. Farmers repeatedly complained that they were unable to obtain necessary help for harvesting their crops when having to compete with the wage scale for relief labor. It is true that the local rates compared unfavorably. For instance, in Christian County the prevailing rate on farms was \$1.00 per day, plus meals; in Caldwell County it was \$.75 per day.

It is only natural in a state where the social case workers had to be taken, untrained and unprepared, from other professional groups or from the lay public at large, that the case work service should be far from satisfactory. The delicacy of all relationships between human beings, the wide-spread necessity for building up community resources adequate to meet individual needs, and the prevalence of mental hygiene problems, represent a burden which even in well-ordered communities tests the capacity of the most skillful and experienced case workers. Place these problems in the Kentucky setting, and turn them

1. K.E.R.A. Bulletin #72634 - "Information for Area Administrators Regarding the Social Service Department of the K.E.R.A.," p. 11.

over to the young home visitors tested in the midst of the depression, place over these home visitors a supervisory personnel scarcely better trained or more experienced, and place at the top a confusing leadership lacking in sound social service principles, and there is pictured that inadequacy of service which is the outstanding feature of Kentucky relief during this period.

For the most part, the social case workers were interested in the program and were eager to serve to the best of their ability. Their inadequacies lay not in a lack of native ability but rather in a lack of preparation, through training and experience, for a proper appreciation of the underlying purposes of the program.

Such inadequate service and faulty administration served to foster public criticism and dissatisfaction; the press actively campaigned against the Relief Administration and the Governor repeatedly refused to cooperate. As a result of this widespread dissatisfaction, the F.E.R.A. sent in a survey staff composed of experienced social workers, engineers, auditors, and special investigators to give a detailed report of the Kentucky program. All but four counties were visited by this group in an effort to get at the basis of the trouble. The results of the study were made available to Washington officials and to the incoming Director, Mr. George H. Goodman, who assumed charge in November, 1934.

THE CLIENTS

THE CLIENTS

The description of the varying skills with which the early administrations tried to meet the critical problems of Kentucky poverty and unemployment during the period we are studying must be interpreted not only in the light of the conditions out of which those needs grew, but also from the point of view of the needy persons immediately concerned. It is not enough to remember that the land was poor; that wealth was declining rapidly; that there was a burden of over-population beyond the capacity of the land to support; and that political and social conditions offered a complexity of situations that extended the problem. It is essential to think in terms of individuals dependent upon the public for support, many of them for the first time.

Since it is impossible to picture as individual units the some 94,000 families under the care of K.E.R.A. in the fall of 1934 the best that can be done for the purpose of this study is, therefore, to describe them statistically; their racial and national composition, their occupations, their age distribution, and their distribution throughout the various portions of the state.

The racial and national composition of the caseload was not unlike that of the state as a whole. There were more than eight white families to every one colored family and the number of foreign born was negligible.

1

A study made in August, 1934, indicated the following distribution of occupations among employable heads of families. Approximately

1. K.E.R.A. Research Division - August, 1934.

45 per cent were farmers. Of these, 18 per cent owned their own farms¹ and 62 per cent were tenants, while 13 per cent were farm laborers.

Coal mining engaged 5.8 per cent; transportation made up 2.4 per cent; factories and mills engaged 4.4 per cent; the skilled-hand trades 2.4 per cent; unskilled labor 5.5 per cent; the professional group comprised 0.3 per cent while 7.1 per cent were unclassified.

Twenty-seven per cent of the caseload were classified as unemployable; 4 per cent were acutely ill; 0.3 per cent were mentally disordered; 1.5 per cent were crippled or paralytic; another 4.7 per cent were chronically ill with other disorders; 7 per cent were blind; 12.4 per cent were aged; 1.6 per cent were in some other sense incapacitated; 5.4 per cent were mothers with dependent children.

From reports from all but two counties,² there are available full data on the age distribution of heads of relief families. The significant fact among the employable group as shown in the following chart is that 65 per cent were under 45 years of age:

Number and percentage of employable persons, heads of relief families, by age groups, September 1, 1934.

<u>Age group</u>	<u>Number of Heads</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
All ages	68,811	100.0
No report	165	.2
Under 25 years	7,215	10.4
Between 25 and 35 years	20,434	29.6
Between 35 and 45 years	17,124	24.8
Between 45 and 55 years	13,677	19.8
Between 55 and 70 years	9,691	14.0
Over 70 years	505	0.7

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1. There was no specification of 6 per cent.
 2. Floyd and Magoffin Counties.

The age distribution is, of course, less significant among the so-called unemployable clients. Since this group includes the aged, the distribution is weighted at that end. The material may be descriptively presented as follows: Of the 94,323 heads of relief families, 25,512 were classified as unemployable. Of these only 3 per cent were under twenty-five years of age; 9 per cent were twenty-five but not yet thirty-five; 14 per cent were thirty-five, but not yet forty-five; 15 per cent were forty-five, but not yet fifty-five; 29 per cent were fifty-five, but not yet seventy; and a full 30 per cent, the largest proportion of the lot, were seventy years and over.

In November, 1932, a majority of the counties had no employment relief administration. Knott County was the only county having more than 50 per cent of its population on relief, while six months later, April, 1933, only nine counties were without relief administrations and the number of counties in which there was between 50 per cent and 60 per cent of the population on relief had jumped to twelve. Four were in the group between 60 per cent and 70 per cent; five were in the group between 70 per cent and 80 per cent, while four - Breathitt, Owsley, Clay and Leslie - had reached amazing percentages, ranging¹ from 84.4 per cent to 90.1 per cent of the population.

By September, 1934, there was material reduction in the number on relief. This was accounted for, in part, by the cessation of the C.W.A. program, whose relief aspects had been largely misunderstood in many

1. K.E.R.A. Statistical Dept. Distribution of Relief Cases,
November 1932, April 1933.

sections of the state. In part, it was due to rigid orders from State Headquarters, which had specified that a limited sum was available and that no more could be spent. In part, it may have been due to a slightly improved administration of relief, with more thoughtful intake, more competent investigations, and an attempt to apply the "means test" to the groups already on relief. At any rate, by this time there was no county in which more than 70 per cent of the population was on relief, and only four counties fell in the group between 50 per cent and 60 per cent.¹

It was apparent in Kentucky, as in other states, that the relief load comprised something not unlike a cross-section of the population as a whole. Misfortune had not fallen upon any one age or occupational group less prepared than the others to resist it. Rather, it had fallen in measurable proportion upon all ages and occupational groups. It bore down hardest, perhaps, upon those whose capacities and educational backgrounds were the most meagre, but it had marked appreciable numbers of persons whose training opportunities were the equal of their neighbors', and whose plight could be laid, not to any particular shortcoming of their own, but to economic conditions beyond their individual control.

1. K.E.R.A. Statistical Dept. Distribution of Relief Cases, August, 1934.

THE WORK PROGRAM

THE WORK PROGRAM

Soon after the F.E.R.A. began to function, it found a wide difference in the programs of work relief. Some states had none of it; some states were making a forced labor system of it; some states were paying in cash and others in kind. A wide variation prevailed in hourly rates of pay. Where the hourly rate was reasonably in accord with the prevailing local rate, the number of hours per week was usually so small that the total relief granted was inadequate.

Faced with these wide variations of plan, the F.E.R.A. issued instructions that all work relief should be paid for at a rate commensurate with the minimum paid under the President's reemployment agreement for similar work. It also urged strongly that all work relief wages be paid in cash.

Upon completion of the Civil Works Administration Program in April, 1934, the K.E.R.A. Work Division was initiated to provide work for employable persons receiving public aid. The program was a result of the Federal Government's insistence upon the right of the client to work, and upon his right to receive payment in cash for this work.

During the first part of the program, Kentucky, following its pattern of highly centralized control, attempted to handle all disbursements for wages from the State Office. Because of the large number of counties and the lack of facilities for mail and transportation service, especially in the mountainous sections of Eastern Kentucky, this method proved

impractical and on July 12, 1934, forty area offices, comprised of approximately three counties each, were set up for the purpose of general administrative control and to provide needed local engineering supervision.

This division of the state into forty area offices proved to be costly, and in an endeavor to reduce the administrative expenses to a minimum the number of areas was reduced to thirty in September, 1934. On February 1, 1935, the areas were again reduced to twenty, and the districts to six, an organization maintained until the close of the program.

During the early part of September, 1934, because of the increased number of workers and the inability of the majority of counties to furnish experienced technical supervision, County Work Supervisors were placed in all counties to aid in properly planning the work, and to supervise the assignment of workers.

The State Office engineering staff consisted of the state director who was directly responsible to the state administrator for the technical planning and operation of the entire work program. The associate or assistant state director was directly responsible for the operation of the program, and was placed in complete charge of the district, area, and county staffs. The director of women's work was responsible for both the planning and operation of projects employing women workers. A staff of examining engineers to check and pass upon the feasibility of all project applications submitted to the State Office, an engineer specifically charged with the responsibility of production and training

projects, a planning consultant responsible for developing projects suitable to the skills and aptitudes of relief workers, and various engineers and architects responsible for specific departmental functions were employed from time to time as the need developed.

The district engineers were placed in direct charge of their respective districts, and were responsible to the state director for the proper conduct of every phase of the work program. Their duties included the following: Examination and approval of applicants for work projects, promotion and planning of the program as a whole, technical supervision of projects, and responsibility for the proper conduct of area and county work division personnel. The district engineer, in short, held the same position in the district as did the state director.

The area work supervisors were responsible to the district engineer and the various department heads in the State Office for approval of applications for work projects, technical advice to county personnel and sponsors of projects both in preliminary planning and during operation, and for the compiling and correlating of numerous reports and physical statistics. The area work supervisor also acted as certifying officer in signing payrolls and other documents requiring this certification.

The county work supervisors, placed in each county relief office throughout the state, were directly responsible for the activities of the work division within their respective counties or regions. These duties included the preparation of applications and reports, contact

with active and potential sponsors of work projects, technical supervision of work projects, and responsibility for the proper assignment of workers. In counties employing fewer than two hundred workers, the county work supervisors were not provided with the services of an assignment clerk and in addition to other duties, assigned all workers.

As required by the Federal Emergency Relief Act, no projects upon private property or sponsored by other than tax supported state or local governmental units were acceptable. A few projects sponsored by state departments such as the Fish and Game Commission were approved for work upon property under long term lease. Airport projects, too, were allowed to operate upon leased property.

Because of the poor financial condition of the majority of Kentucky counties, the program was very difficult to start, but once under way the type and economic value of projects steadily improved. This difficulty was greatly enhanced because of the very low monthly salary paid to workers and the lack of skilled persons on the relief rolls.

Upon receipt of notice of the county allotment, usually on the first of the month, the relief worker in the local office issued to the work division assignment clerk a form of certification in duplicate covering every employable case carried on the relief roll. Upon this form was noted the client's name, address, and other pertinent information including the amount of relief in dollars and cents to be earned by the client during the current period. The assignment clerk made his selection of clients on the basis of occupational skill, and location of the project, notifying the relief worker of the

assignment. The client was then notified as to the location of the project, name of foreman, days, and amount of time to be worked.

The amount to be earned was established by the social service division for each individual family on relief. In nearly every case this amount exceeded the amount of money available, and it was reduced on a percentage basis to fit the relief allotment for the particular county. The selection of workers from certified lists for assignment to work projects was based entirely upon the degree of skill required of the worker and the geographic location of the job in respect to the client's home. This latter consideration was in most counties of major importance because of poor transportation facilities and the small amount of relief available.

After a client was properly certified to the work division, every effort was made to provide continuous employment by developing new projects requiring the same type of worker. Upon completion of projects, workers were transferred to new projects with as little delay as possible. By this procedure it was usually possible to continue a client upon work relief from month to month without necessitating his return to the relief worker for direct aid.

As the majority of workers were allotted from six to eight days work per month, the best method of assignment was found to be upon the basis of two days per week. This assured an evenly distributed income for the client throughout the period. In some cases, after consultation with the relief worker, the client was allowed to work successive days

until the monthly allotment was consumed. The work division preferred this plan because it made operation of the project easier and it was more satisfactory to the client, for he was able to purchase supplies in larger quantities, thereby obtaining reduced rates.

Training projects for both men and women were conducted upon a state-wide basis and workers who had become inept in their trades because of continued inactivity were given opportunity to regain their skill. Promotion of workers to a higher occupational classification with resulting greater wage rate was effected wherever training and experience conclusively proved the worker was suited for advancement.

The same program and methods were adopted in regard to professional and non-manual workers, resulting in the restoration of many workers to their normal skills, and a large number of unskilled and inexperienced juniors were given the opportunity of learning trades and vocations.

At the beginning of the work program, clients assigned to work projects were not allowed to earn more than would be granted them through direct relief. This limitation was mainly due to the very limited funds available to the counties for relief, making a difference in allotment between employables and unemployables very difficult. As the federal grant was increased for general relief purposes, and the amount supplemented by the state, standards for allotments to work and direct aid were increased to care for transportation and clothing.

The activities and accomplishments of the work division were numerous and diversified. As a result of the program, Kentucky had 452 miles

of road constructed and 5,888 miles repaired; 15 schools were constructed while 45 others were under construction at the close of the program in July, 1935; other projects such as hospitals, libraries, municipal and county buildings, recreation facilities and sanitation added to the constructive program.

WOMEN'S WORK DIVISION

WOMEN'S WORK DIVISION

The director of the women's work division was directly responsible to the State Director for the planning of the program and for the establishment of suitable working procedures for the various types of projects initiated.

The planning of a suitable program was accomplished through questionnaires sent to ten representative citizens in each of the one hundred twenty counties of the state. Their suggestions were based, first, upon the type of work the relief women could do, and second, upon the community need for that special kind of work.

During the initial stages of the program, workrooms, equipment, and materials were secured through local contribution. As the program developed, the demand for various articles of clothing produced became so great that the K.E.R.A. began providing materials on training work center projects, which were purchased from the general relief allotment contributed by the State of Kentucky. All articles produced were released to the Commodity Distribution Department for distribution to relief families.

In August, 1934, thirty mattress work rooms were established in the state for the utilization of surplus cotton contributed to the state by the Federal Surplus Relief Corporation. It is interesting to note that every manufacturer of mattresses throughout the state cooperated with the relief administration in the making of the mattresses.

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1. The ten representative citizens being: Mayor, County Judge, Lawyer, Superintendent of Schools, Groceryman, President of Men's Luncheon Club, President P.T.A., President of Missionary Society, President of Woman's Club, and a farm wife.

Physical examinations were required of all women assigned to production projects. If laboratory tests indicated a contagious disease, the client was considered ineligible for work and the social service division was notified in order that corrective medical aid could be given. The State Board of Health cooperated with the Work Division by furnishing seventeen thousand three hundred and ninety-three containers, and examining thirteen thousand six hundred twenty-six laboratory specimens. The Work Division assisted the State Board of Health by approving a project to employ a doctor and a group of technicians to make laboratory tests.

The sewing projects combined training period and work center which accomplished a two-fold purpose: needed garments and articles were made for families of men and women who had been unemployed for long periods, and training was provided which might fit clients for industry later. Women relief clients not working on the projects were encouraged to come in for these training periods.

One of the outstanding contributions made by the division was the initiation of packhorse libraries in mountain sections where there were no public libraries. This was accomplished by interesting local governmental units in the need for this supplementary educational service. Local units furnished the horses for transportation up the creek beds, and various civic groups supplied the books.

LABOR RELATIONS

LABOR RELATIONS

At the beginning of the K.E.R.A. work program, the prevailing wage scale as established at the close of the C.W.A. program was adopted. This took into consideration the federal minimum under C.W.A. of not less than thirty cents per hour for unskilled, forty cents for semi-skilled, and sixty cents for skilled labor. The established wage in the locality was reached by forming a local wage committee, composed of one member representing labor, one member representing business, and one member from the C.W.A. committee.

A local grievance committee was formed to hear complaints of labor, business, and the administration. These committees endeavored to settle all disputes locally and a state committee was maintained at the State Headquarters to arbitrate disputes that could not be settled locally.

Where local labor was organized, the local wage for the different skills was adopted but as comparatively few localities in Kentucky had recognized labor organizations, the findings of the committee determined the prevailing local wage, by getting reports of the wages paid by as many and as representative employers as possible.

The wage established at the beginning of the program was in effect until November, 1934, at which time instructions were received from Federal Administrator Hopkins to establish the prevailing wage in all localities without regard to minimum wages formerly adopted. The wage committees were re-established and in some instances completely new

committees formed, as many of the original committees had dissolved. The operation of these committees was the same as of the original with the right of appeal to State Headquarters and finally to Washington.

Many counties established very low rates for unskilled labor but many of these were reconsidered, and the average for the state at the close of the program was approximately twenty-five cents per hour for unskilled labor, the rate paid by the State Highway Commission.

A few scattered strikes occurred. No attempt was made to operate projects in counties during strikes until all differences were settled. These settlements were accomplished through the local and in a few instances the State Grievance Committee. Workers on strike were placed on direct relief until a settlement of the dispute was accomplished.

Unemployment organizations were practically non-existent until the latter part of the program. During the last few months several of the larger cities and towns had charters from national and regional labor organizations which had no appreciable influence upon the work program in the state. Any grievances which they submitted were immediately referred to the local grievance committee, and almost without exception settled locally and amicably.

No workmen's compensation insurance was carried to cover injured employees. All injury cases were immediately referred to the sponsoring unit for reasonable medical attention, and the injured party was transferred to direct relief until able to return to duty. The total number of lost time accidents reported during the entire K.E.R.A. program was two hundred and fifty-eight. This number included one fatality. There is no record of a total disability case.

SURPLUS COMMODITY DISTRIBUTION

SURPLUS COMMODITY DISTRIBUTION

As a supplement to the F.E.R.A. Program, the Federal Surplus Relief Corporation was established October, 4, 1933. It was a non-profit corporation with no capital stock and the incorporators and members were restricted to the persons holding the offices of Secretary of Agriculture, Federal Emergency Relief Administrator of Public Works, and the Federal Emergency Relief Administrator.

The primary purpose of the Corporation was (1) to assist in relieving the existing national emergency by the purchase, processing, and distribution for consumption of agricultural and other products as a means to remove surpluses and improve prices; and (2) to apply these surplus agricultural and other products in the form of foodstuffs, clothing, fuel, and otherwise to the relief of hardship and suffering caused by unemployment. The distribution of these commodities was to be over and above the quantities which would otherwise have been consumed by these people.

The general Corporation policy, based upon carefully prepared plans of its division of commodity distribution and upon family relief case loads certified by the respective state emergency administration, was to purchase and distribute a few basic and essential commodities.

Surplus agricultural products were received from the Agricultural Adjustment Administration or certified by it as surpluses, and paid for so far as practicable from proceeds of processing taxes levied on the specific products.

Institutions receiving surplus commodities on behalf of families or persons dependent upon them for relief were required to file sworn affidavits with receipts for monthly supplies, declaring that such supplies were used over and above usual consumption and not in substitution for regular purchases of the institution.

All plans for commodity distribution were designed to insure adequate relief according to expert dietary and medical recommendation, and at the same time there was a desire to avoid waste or substitution of relief supplies for goods which might otherwise be bought through normal channels of commercial distribution. The federal plan permitted marginal families to be aided in the hope that this assistance would prevent the necessity for relief. From a dietary standpoint the program was highly approved because it encouraged the use of citrus fruits, canned and dried milk which the client seldom included in his purchases.

State relief administrations were held responsible for the selection of the most satisfactory, economical, and efficient methods of distribution according to their local facilities and conditions; the expense of local distribution was met out of state relief funds; and the success of the distribution program was entirely a state responsibility.

One of the outstanding weaknesses of the K.E.R.A. was apparent in the distribution of surplus commodities. Being one of the many specialized services set up by the director, it was entirely separate and uncorrelated with the social service program; and while much good food was put to use by this service, there was great waste in the method of distribution.

The amount of commodities poured into Kentucky was unduly large in view of the regular food provision. This was due, in part, to the quick disposition that was made of the surplus food. It was given to the clients in such large quantities that they could not use it all while fresh and much of it consequently spoiled after it reached their homes.

Administratively, one of the reasons for this waste of surplus foods was the requirement, made by the commodity director, that they be completely distributed within six hours after their arrival at any local distribution point. This hasty distribution in large quantities was naturally incompatible with a sound practice of relief.

In some instances, commodities were counted as a resource in the budget, thereby reducing the deficit. This was done in spite of the quite evident fact that the amount and kind of commodities varied appreciably from month to month.

The commodity distribution department was considered as a preferred sponsor of work projects, and if surplus commodities were received from the F.S.R.C. in bulk form so that packaging was necessary before distribution, or if inspection of articles was required, projects were set up and relief workers furnished. Services were furnished, such as inspection of canned beef and mutton, sacking cabbage, packaging dried skimmed milk, transporting commodities to and from distribution points, labeling molasses, and construction of eighty-four mechanical refrigerators throughout the state.

The refrigerators were used by the commodity department primarily to handle fresh beef available through the Drought Cattle Program. The refrigerators were placed at distribution centers, the eighty-four erected at a cost of \$98,085.90.

DROUGHT CATTLE PROGRAM

DROUGHT CATTLE PROGRAM

The Drought Cattle Program in Kentucky was initiated the last of July, 1934, by notification from the F.E.R.A. that Kentucky was expected to pasture and slaughter one hundred thousand head of cattle from the Western drought-stricken area.

The organization within the state was one of inter-departmental responsibility shared by the commodity distribution department and the work division. Briefly, the responsibility was divided in the following manner: The work division was given the responsibility of making contacts with the farmers throughout the state and obtaining from them grazing proposals and proposals for the sale of hay, feed, and ensilage. This responsibility was so assigned because the work division had the only field staff adequate to handle the job quickly.

The commodity distribution department had the responsibility of receiving the cattle from the drought area, arranging for B.A.I. inspection and tests and reshipment to the various counties for grazing. Upon arrival in the counties, the work division assumed the responsibility for placing the cattle on pasture, inspection at ten-day intervals, and shipment of cattle from pasture to selected packing plants. The responsibility for all hides, commercial processing and complete distribution was given to the commodity department.

Although Kentucky originally planned to care for one hundred thousand head of cattle, in September the program was curtailed and

the state received but sixty thousand five hundred and sixty-one head. The sudden curtailment caused some criticism and dissatisfaction among the farmers holding unfilled grazing and feed contracts and a few monetary adjustments were made.

The L. P. Bornwasser Company Packing Plant was leased by the work division for a period of six months for the slaughter of drought cattle, and packaging of fresh beef for distribution through the commodity distribution department. The first slaughtering was done October 19, 1934, and continued until January 5, 1935. This project was operated by skilled non-relief and unskilled relief labor under Government inspection. Edible and inedible offal were sold under contract amounting to \$5,903.18, and the dressed weight of beef shipped amounted to one million three hundred and thirty thousand eight hundred and fifteen pounds.

TRANSIENT PROGRAM

TRANSIENT PROGRAM

In compliance with the federal regulations, Kentucky initiated a transient program in July, 1933. For the purpose of administration, "transient" was defined as a person who had been within the state borders less than twelve months and for whom the locality was not legally responsible. The purpose of the program was to make available to this group the same socialized program that was offered to local resident groups, with the ultimate hope of rehabilitation.

All transients in Kentucky were concentrated in shelters in five cities: Ashland, Corbin, Lexington, Louisville and Paducah. Fourteen hundred transients were provided with food, shelter, and medical care.¹ The funds for transient care came as a direct federal grant and were in addition to the emergency relief grant for the state.

Camp sites were located in May, 1934, where concentration camps could be established for the purpose of prosecuting work projects of a permanent nature on public property. The plan as developed required that the public agency furnish materials, equipment, and supervision; the Transient Department, the labor; and the Work Division technical supervision and such small tools as were available. As a result, two transient camps were established, one in Blue Lick State Park, Robertson County, and one on Elkhorn Creek in Scott County.

1. K.E.R.A. Yearly Report, July, 1935.

The work as outlined in Blue Lick Park involved the drilling of a permanent well, laying water lines, building a shelter house, erecting a museum, building a custodian's lodge, constructing foot trails throughout the park, developing picnic areas by constructing tables, seats and ovens, general landscaping and planting, fencing the entire park, constructing roads, and general cleaning up of the park property. The project was completed after six months of operation.

The Elkhorn Creek Project involved the construction of two small concrete dams to form a lake approximately three miles long. This lake was stocked by the State Fish and Game Commission for use as fish hatcheries and for the benefit of the fishing public. Work was provided for an average of sixty-five men daily for a period of six months.

It is interesting to note in connection with the employment of transient labor that from an average of eleven hundred and twenty-two persons employed in the state, only three hundred and nineteen were available for construction work; the remaining eight hundred and three were engaged in non-productive cleaning, policing, cooking, nursing, clerical, and general repair of living quarters.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

The Educational Program permitted the employment on a work-relief basis within their profession of unemployed teachers, and of other needy groups in need of general or specialized instruction. The five-pointed program included the employment of instructors to be assigned to rural schools closed or partially closed as the result of a lack of funds; to classes in written and spoken English for illiterates and foreigners; to classes in vocational training; to classes for the education of the physically handicapped, and to classes for the general education of adults with little previous schooling.

The teachers employed in Kentucky through the Emergency Educational Department were under the control and administration of the State Department of Education, in Frankfort, Kentucky. They were available to the Work Division which assigned them as instructors in training and recreation projects.

STUDENT-AID PROGRAM

STUDENT-AID PROGRAM

The Student-aid Program was authorized by the F.E.R.A. in December, 1933, but Kentucky did not avail itself of the program until September, 1934. It was in effect a work relief program designed to give limited financial assistance to needy college students. Twelve per cent of the student enrollment was the quota for each state and an allotment of \$15.00 per month was given each student. This amount was fixed by the federal plan.

As of September 1, 1934, a monthly grant was entered for \$21,255.00 for student relief in Kentucky. Information as to the composition of the student load is most meager. Thirty-one Kentucky educational institutions shared the student-aid grant. The number of students was allotted to each by the Educational Coordinator of the K.E.R.A. While the average number per institution was 45.71, there were three colleges which had a grant to only seven students each, while the two largest institutions had a student-aid roll of 279 and 182 respectively. ¹ Selections were made by a faculty committee, composed of the registrar, the bursar, the secretary to the president, the chairmen of extension work, and the head of the personnel department. All cases were considered by the committee

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1. Participating Institutions: Asbury, Baptist Theological Seminary, Berea, Bethel Woman's, Campbellsville, Caney Junior, Centre, Eastern Kentucky State Teachers', Georgetown, Kentucky State Industrial College, Ky. Wesleyan, Lee's Junior, Lindsey Wilson, Louisville Normal, Morehead, Mt. St. Joseph, Murray, Nazareth Senior, Nazareth Junior, Paducah Junior, Pikeville, Presbyterian Theo. Seminary, Sacred Heart, St. Catholic Jr., Sue Bennett, Transylvania, Union, U. of L., Western Ky. Ind. College, Western Ky. State Teachers' College.

sitting as a whole. The selection was made chiefly at the opening of the school term, although replacements were decided upon from time to time thereafter.

Problems of scholastic ratings were checked very closely. An original interview was conducted by the chairman of the committee, and a local sponsor signed the recommendation. Month by month the academic grades of the students were recorded. As soon as the grade fell below a set minimum, the student was dropped from the student-aid rolls.

The kind of work required from the students in return for the aid given varied greatly. It ranged from assistance to the janitor to special clerical responsibilities in the student office of the K.E.R.A. A large number of the jobs were of a manual nature for even though the student was required to note on application forms any special abilities, these were apt to be so general as to be of little value in allocating work.

From the standpoint of expenditures the student aid program was the smallest of the special programs; from the standpoint of a constructive youth program its contribution cannot be over-estimated. It was one of the few programs that did not restrict its assistance to youth actually certified for public assistance. Therefore, it made it possible for a vast number of young people in marginal families to benefit by the program. It not only gave the youth an opportunity to take advantage of the combined work and educational activities which would lead to future personal security but it also prevented the youth from competing with the older group for industrial employment. The program was transferred to the National Youth Administration September, 1935, and has, since that time, functioned under that agency.

CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS

CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS

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The Civilian Conservation Corps was established in April, 1933 and continued uninterrupted through 1935 and subsequently. The program was limited to boys between the ages of 17 and 28 who would willingly enroll for camp duty and who would agree to contribute a substantial share of their earnings to their families. The majority of the young men enrolled in the C.C.C. were recruited from families on emergency relief rolls. Therefore, in many instances, the contribution of the enrollee was sufficient to remove the family from the emergency relief rolls, but in other instances the family remained on relief during part or all of the enrollee's period of enlistment. C.C.C. enrollees received subsistence in camps plus the monthly wage of \$25.00.

In August, 1935, Kentucky had fifty-nine C.C.C. camps, of which forty-nine were for white boys between 17 and 28 years of age, four were for colored boys of the same age group and six were for veterans. The boys of the first two groups were selected from families on relief or eligible for relief. The total number of persons in the Kentucky C.C.C. at this time was approximately 16,000. The types of work done by the boys included : making trails, paths, simple roads, and fire lanes; planting of trees, timber survey work; construction of fire

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1. The more familiar designation of Civilian Conservation Corps is used to refer to the Emergency Conservation Work Program, which includes, in addition to C.C.C., conservation on Indian reservations and in the territories.

towers, shelters, etc.; checking of soil erosion, flood control, landscaping and other work in the parks and recreational areas; eradication of tree pests and diseases; and improvement of the forest by thinning and removing undesirable species. The men were also subject to emergency call day or night to fight forest fires.

The educational program of the C.C.C. has been of particular value to youths from low income families. This program comprises the elimination of illiteracy among enrollees, elimination of common-school deficiencies, instruction on the job, vocational training, cultural and general training, training in proper use of leisure time,¹ and character and citizenship development. Its success is indicated by the uninterrupted and continuing program.

1. C.C.C., 4th Anniversary Report to the President, 1937, p.18.

RURAL REHABILITATION

RURAL REHABILITATION

Farmers who could regain self-support, if provided with fertilizer, seed, tools, or work animals, presented a special problem to relief administrators when federal aid was first extended. Early in the history of F.E.R.A. the relief administrations of southern states began to make advances of such capital goods to the relief clients instead of giving them recurrent direct relief grants.

In April, 1934, a special Rural Rehabilitation Division was established within the F.E.R.A. to develop this type of aid to farmers on a national scale. Its purpose was "to assist destitute farm families and other families residing in rural areas to become self-supporting and independent of emergency relief aid."¹

This program recognized the variety of problems facing farmers who had been receiving drought or other emergency relief or whose resources were nearly exhausted. For those living on fertile land, it proposed to provide such resources as seed, livestock, equipment, buildings, building repairs, and more land if needed; to arrange debt adjustments if necessary; and to give training and advice in farm management and home economics. Displaced farmers would be relocated on the land. Farmers living on poor land would be moved to better land purchased under a land program in which the A.A.A. shared. All subsistence and

1. "Rural Rehabilitation Program," Monthly Report of the F.E.R.A., May, 1934, p. 6.

capital goods provided under the rehabilitation program would be assigned to cash value, charged against the families' accounts, and paid for by the farmers in cash, in kind, or in work on Federal work projects.¹

Although these general objectives were determined by the Federal Relief Administration, the program was worked out under state control. The State Emergency Relief Administration organized its own rural rehabilitation division to formulate policies and to conduct the program.

1. First Annual Report, Resettlement Administration, 1936, p. 9.

THE MEDICAL PROGRAM

THE MEDICAL PROGRAM

In recognition of the responsibility of the Government in the conservation and maintenance of the public health, the F.E.R.A. on June 23, 1933, defined the general scope of its program and established regulations governing the provision of such medical care to recipients of unemployment relief. The F.E.R.A. further urged that a uniform policy with regard to the provision of medical, nursing, and dental care for indigent persons in their homes be made the basis of an agreement between the relief administration and the organized medical, nursing, and dental professions.

According to the federal ruling, relief administrations were to recognize within legal and economic limitations, the traditional family and family-physician relationship in the authorization of medical care for indigent persons in their homes; the traditional physician-nurse relationship in the authorization of bedside nursing care; the traditional dentist-patient relationship in the authorization of emergency dental care. The adequacy of such relief was made an obligation on the State Emergency Relief Administration.

As outlined by the F.E.R.A., the program was one of the outstanding attempts on the part of federal authorities to provide adequate facilities for meeting relief needs with maximum local participation.

As in other instances, the medical program in Kentucky was set up at the top and reached down in arbitrary and rigid uniformity from the

State Office to the clients at the bottom. Little attempt was made to secure the cooperation of the organized medical and dental societies, or the advice of the outstanding practitioners. Instead, a single executive at headquarters undertook to set up a scheme for fees, services required, and special limitations which tended to irritate the doctors and dentists, entirely alienating many from the relief program. In some counties, every physician refused to accept medical orders, which resulted in the clients' receiving no medical attention, however necessary.

Some of the features of the program most objected to by the physicians were the rigid requirements that post-partum calls should be made at specified intervals; that the state arbitrarily ruled out x-ray, glasses, minor and major surgery, including the setting of fractures, thus limiting necessary medical care, and placing the physician at a disadvantage. The fee schedule allowed for an office call at \$0.50 and a house call at \$1.00, fees which were not in accord with professional standards.

The dental program was as limited as the medical program and aroused as much resentment. In some counties the work was limited to extractions; in some there was no dental program whatsoever. The state requirements, rigid as in the medical field, permitted an arbitrary maximum of \$5.00 for any one patient, the \$5.00 to cover services only. The consequence of this limitation was the temptation to do first the work which did not require any outlay for materials.

TRAINING PROGRAM

TRAINING PROGRAM

A training program for members of the social service staff in the various counties was initiated in June, 1934. The director of training spent the first three months acquainting herself with the state set-up, the area and county offices. In October, the training staff was increased and definite plans laid for a Training Institute. The purpose of the Institute was to acquaint the social service staff members with federal and state rulings on relief policies and to train the group in the fundamental principles of social service techniques.

The state was divided into nine districts with each member of the training staff assigned certain districts. The Institutes were held once a week in each area office and over a period of four weeks. The first series was completed in December, each worker having received the same course of training. Two series followed, one in January, 1935, and another the following April.

The F.E.R.A. contributed to the training program by granting an allotment to Kentucky which provided for the sending of twelve home visitors to the School of Social Service Administration of the University of Chicago, for graduate training. The scholarship was \$650.00 per student and included training for two quarters at the school. Each student was required to sign an agreement to return to the K.E.R.A. for at least one year's employment after the training period was completed.

The University of Louisville, the University of Kentucky, and Berea College cooperated in the training program by offering courses in social work that were of immediate value to the worker-in-training. The courses offered placed emphasis on casework, community organization, and the administration of public welfare. Under this plan, sixty county relief workers received training in a six weeks' course at the University of Louisville, and one hundred twenty case-workers were given six weeks' courses during the spring and summer of 1935 at Berea College and the University of Kentucky. This experience clearly indicated that Kentucky citizens were interested in social work as a profession and were prepared to qualify if given the opportunity.

THE FISCAL HISTORY

THE FISCAL HISTORY

The fiscal history of emergency relief in Kentucky had its discouraging periods. On October 13, 1932, Governor Ruby Laffoon deposited \$50,000 with the Kentucky Bond and Trust Company, Madisonville, which represented the first federal grant to Kentucky under the R.F.C.

With the passage of the Federal Emergency Relief Act on May 22, 1933, there began a battle for funds on the part of the Federal Government that lasted until November 1, 1934. Governor Laffoon persistently claimed that Kentucky was unable to provide relief for its needy and, in addition, that there was no legal provision for such an appropriation. There were repeated attempts on the part of the federal administration to persuade Kentucky to assume some financial responsibility for the emergency program. Finally, at the insistence of Federal Administrator Hopkins, the Governor called a special session of the legislature in August, 1933, only to have that convocation become involved in a long factional wrangle over the methods of taxation. Although the session authorized beer and whisky taxes, Governor Laffoon later announced that after raising \$250,000 for October relief work on state warrants, that he could see no further funds forthcoming. By November, 1933, the Federal Government had contributed \$2,854,277.00 to Kentucky's relief program while the state had contributed \$127.00.

During the summer of 1933, Kentucky had been denied federal aid for six weeks because of its refusal to supplement federal funds and

although there was no study made to determine the effects of this hardship on the client, it was generally conceded that there was considerable suffering.

Therefore, when the Governor announced on November 8, 1933, that Kentucky would relinquish its responsibility, the Federal Administrator stated that the Federal Government was unwilling to allow the unemployed to suffer because of neglect on the part of the state authorities and assumed control of the administration of relief in Kentucky on that date.

The Federal Administrator brought about the resignation of the Governor's Administrator, Harper Gatton, and appointed as his successor, Thornton Wilcox, former Director of Welfare for the City of Louisville. With the change in administrators and with relief appropriations approved at the special session of the State Legislature in October, the situation appeared hopeful but friction between the Governor and the federal authorities persisted, and on January 22, 1934, newspapers announced that Federal Administrator Hopkins would withdraw the federal program from Kentucky unless Governor Laffoon turned over to the State Administrator approximately \$278,000.00 as provided by the State Legislature. The Governor had been holding up the funds levied by the special session purportedly because of the phrasing of the two tax laws, but when confronted with the federal threat, he agreed to comply as soon as the State Administrator made a formal "demand." By October 1, 1934, the Federal Government had contributed \$30,780,061.46 to the relief program in Kentucky while the state had contributed \$1,035,041.52, the ratio of federal funds to state funds being about 29 to 1. The total stated does not

include the value of surplus commodities which approximated \$3,000,000.

The Governor vacillated between absolute refusal to cooperate to complete compliance. Newspaper accounts reveal continuous retraction of statements, and utter disregard for any responsibility for a developing program. The attitude of the highest State Executive could not be lightly ignored but had to be dealt with constantly. His lack of understanding and unwillingness to cooperate merely added to the problems of Kentucky and to the insecurity of its people. Unquestionably, his lack of cooperation and resistance to the program were responsible for the resignation of two Commissions, each composed of outstanding citizens in the community, and for a retarded public welfare program in Kentucky. This attitude persisted until the appointment of Mr. George H. Goodman as State Relief Administrator, November 1, 1934.

THE CLOSING PROGRAM

THE CLOSING PROGRAM

The last year of the emergency program was, unquestionably, the most hopeful period. The Director, Mr. Goodman, had a broad social viewpoint, the cooperation of the Governor, and the support of the press. As a business man and former owner of a newspaper in Paducah, Kentucky, he had evinced considerable interest over a period of years in private and public philanthropic enterprises; he had long been associated with the work of local charitable agencies; and he had furnished considerable leadership for Community Chest drives.

Mr. Goodman seized every opportunity to improve public relationships. He assumed the attitude that the public, through the press, was entitled to know Kentucky's relief problems. He appointed an experienced newspaper man to head the publicity department and arranged for daily releases to the press; he lowered the number of areas thereby reducing administrative costs; he cooperated with the social service division to bring about sounder policies and effective administration; and he encouraged improved personnel standards.

The real test of Mr. Goodman's social philosophy, strength, and ability came in December, 1935, when the F.E.R.A. program was succeeded by the W.P.A. program. With the inauguration of the Works Program, the Federal Government announced its intention to terminate relief and to turn over to the states and localities the responsibility for all persons in need who could not be classified as employable. At this time, the Director secured from Governor Laffoon \$250,000 for the purpose of

providing cash relief to the unemployable clients then on the rolls of the K.E.R.A. This appropriation and the subsequent ones made by the in-coming Governor, A. B. Chandler, enabled Kentucky to understand better the underlying problems of its unemployable group and to make the change to a work program with some consideration of all groups concerned.

CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

In the preceding pages an attempt has been made to give historical facts concerning the emergency relief period and to show the evolution of the program in Kentucky. From the standpoint of history, including administration and organization, the program followed the same general pattern as that found in many other states. In Kentucky, however, it differed widely in some respects for it was more than a program of emergency relief. It represented a departure from the early concepts of public responsibility as limited to institutional care, and led to an acceptance of state responsibility for a more progressive and comprehensive program of public welfare.

As this study indicates, those in need were not confined to any one age or occupational group but included all ages, all occupations and the skilled as well as the unskilled. Their problems, although fundamentally related to declining wealth, long-time agricultural ills, and overpopulation of land, were immediately concerned with unemployment and economic conditions beyond their control. They rightfully looked toward government for assistance and thus become the important factor in the establishment of a program of unemployment relief.

As economic conditions grew more acute, relief needs increased, and immediate action was essential if the program was to serve its purpose. Consequently, policies were established at headquarters on a state-wide basis - the clients having no voice in policy-making or

otherwise participating in the program except for the working out of their relief grants. Although this is not in accord with modern concepts of a long-time public welfare program, the use of such methods during the emergency period is understandable in view of the intensity of need and the necessity for beginning a comprehensive program to meet immediate needs.

Administrative standards in Kentucky were greatly handicapped by inadequate funds. For almost a year the program operated on federal contributions alone, and for six weeks during the first summer did not function because of the lack of cooperation between the state and federal authorities. The funds requested were based on the needs of Kentucky but the Federal Government was not in a position to grant the full amount when the state was refusing to contribute any part of its share. Naturally, the availability of funds was an important factor in determining amounts granted those in need. Even though the state had chosen to give relief at a subsistence level, it was not always possible to meet even this standard in view of the limited grants. The adverse effects of these low standards upon the client group with respect to physical and mental ills cannot at this time be determined; that the administration was conscious of the possibility of malnutrition is evidenced by the employment of a home economist in each Area Office to advise regarding food budgets. Throughout the life of the program there were sincere attempts to utilize available funds to the best interests of the client.

There was a wide variance in administrative costs from year to year because of the highly centralized organization and uncorrelated programs and of frequent changes in federal programs which involved important changes in emphasis from emergency relief to wage assistance and vice versa. We must not overlook the well-known fact that the cost of administering an inadequate relief grant to a family is the same as the cost of administering a more adequate one. This fact makes overhead costs appear out of proportion when compared with the amount of relief given.

The development of an effective public welfare program is dependent upon community participation. The emergency program was handicapped in this respect although there were some early efforts made toward the organization of county committees which might have proved permanently beneficial had their interest been sustained. Because there were few local agencies in the state, the emergency program had no established foundation on which to build and therefore functioned independently, and in the majority of counties, as the sole relief agency. Local communities were unprepared to understand or accept a state program at this time and while the foundation for a permanent public assistance program cannot be said to have been laid during this period, yet there was a growing awareness of and a conscious awakening to the needs and benefits of such a program.

The earlier part of the K.E.R.A. program, characterized by administrative confusion, afforded little opportunity for the fundamentals

of social service essential in a satisfactory public welfare program. In spite of this, many staff members were gaining through first hand experience some insight into social problems and were thus becoming prepared to accept the later program which was characterized by an awareness of the principles of social service and an attempt to embody these principles in the program. In view of the almost total lack of trained personnel in the state, the attempts of staff members to grasp and utilize the principles of social service are commendatory. A practical illustration of this attitude is the training program carried out in 1934 in cooperation with colleges and universities.

Without federal leadership the program could not have been as effective as it was because there was no comparable state leadership and no state-wide relief program in operation. It was through this leadership that the standards of relief and investigational service were raised; that the wage rate was increased to the community level; and that through the proper stimulation, state funds were secured for the program. One of the most helpful contributions of the federal leaders was their efforts to determine the state problems and to locate resources to meet these problems; this called for a willingness to adapt the federal program to fit the needs of Kentucky.

The preceding study brings us to the era of the W.P.A. which is the third wage assistance program of the Federal Government. It differs from the preceding work program in that the workers are paid a security wage instead of working out their budgetary deficits. These

last two programs diverged widely from the C.W.A. plan of a thirty-hour week with the wage rate conforming to the local wage scale. In these three major programs we can see the intention on the part of the Federal Government to stay within the field in which it originally planned to participate during the "emergency" period, namely, unemployment. We see, too, federal recognition of the need for a comprehensive attack on the problem of social and economic security which culminated in the Social Security Act of 1935. The need of such legislation is clearly indicated in this study where evidence shows that in 1934 only 27 per cent of the total relief load in Kentucky fell into the category of unemployment while 73 per cent fell into other categories.

Successful rehabilitation is rarely accomplished in a few months; it is a step-by-step process and to accomplish it there must be continuity of administration guided by consistent policy. During the emergency program the relief recipient was frequently confused by the numerous programs and the rapidity of administrative changes. Assistance to those in need evolved through the period of direct relief, work relief, rehabilitation, and Works Program employment and the inauguration of each new program necessitated a period of adjustment and experiment during which administrative policies and procedures were not always clear. Consequently, those most in need of assistance were often left with a marked feeling of insecurity. In other words, definite and enduring accomplishment in preventing and alleviating

distress will depend upon coordination of effort on all three levels of government, and a continuing course of action uninterrupted by sudden shifts of policy.

The public has evinced interest, from time to time, by means of endorsement and criticism of the various emergency programs; that the people of Kentucky are increasingly ready to support a comprehensive system of public welfare as a function of democratic government is now in 1938 indicated by the organization of the State Department of Public Welfare, as well as by continuing interest in the W.P.A. and by various developments in local governments. Federal, state, and local authorities have now entered a new era in their interpretation of their responsibilities for social organization in relation to the welfare of the people. This brief study is an effort to show what contribution to this field was made in Kentucky between 1932 and 1935 by the emergency program. It leaves for further study the question of the legal status of the individual in relation to a minimum standard of living; workmen's compensation; under-employment; and the effect of these problems upon the policies of the United States Employment Service.

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