

REPORT  
of  
COMMITTEE ON THESIS

The undersigned, acting as a Committee of the Graduate School, have read the accompanying thesis submitted by Herbert Glenn Kenagy for the degree of Master of Arts. They approve it as a thesis meeting the requirements of the Graduate School of the University of Minnesota, and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

Minneapolis, Minnesota

May 31, 1917

Lloyd M. Crosgrove  
Chairman

A. B. White

A. J. Todd

REPORT  
of  
COMMITTEE ON EXAMINATION

This is to certify that we the undersigned, as a Committee of the Graduate School, have given Herbert Glenn Kenagy final oral examination for the degree of Master of Arts. We recommend that the degree of Master of Arts be conferred upon the candidate.

Minneapolis, Minnesota

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58-1941

THE PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT OFFICE-

A Type Study  
With Special Reference to  
Minneapolis conditions

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MINNESOTA  
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A Thesis Submitted to the  
Faculty of the Graduate School of the  
University of Minnesota

by  
Herbert G. Kenagy

In Partial Filfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of  
Master of Arts

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## INTRODUCTION

Public employment offices are probably here to stay. Since they organise the labor market, they are a most important form of governmental activity. To date, however, they have not been, on the whole, highly successful in accomplishing their task. This failure has been due, primarily, to misconceptions of purpose, incompleteness of organisation, and lack of knowledge of the correct principles of organisation and management. The various offices have acted as independent units, new offices have not profited by the experience of older ones, and there has been little cooperation or exchange of information among them. In consequence, there is at present very little uniformity of practice or agreement in principle. Employment-office literature consists, for the most part, of popular magazine articles setting forth the need for such offices; comparatively little has been written about the principles of their organisation and the methods to be used in their administration. Yet these are the points upon which agreement must be reached before public employment offices can hope to attain efficiency and effectiveness in dealing with the problems of unemployment and the organisation of the labor market. It is with the hope of contributing in some small way to the process of standardisation in employment office principles and practice that this thesis has been written.

A minor purpose has been to develop more or less definite plans for a public employment office in Minneapolis which would typify the general principles advanced in the thesis and yet be

adapted to local needs and conditions in so far as the writer has been able to ascertain them. There has been a movement for some years in Minneapolis looking to the establishment of such an office--initiated by the Committee on Unemployment of the Civic and Commerce Association--and it is hoped that the plans here presented will form a basis for more definite work.

The chief sources of information have been the annual reports of the various public employment offices; the Proceedings of the American Association of Public Employment Offices; studies of unemployment and public employment offices made for the American Association for Labor Legislation; and, a questionnaire sent out by the writer, through the Committee on Unemployment of the Civic And Commerce Association, to various public offices of the better class. The discussion concerning local conditions has been based largely on a study made last summer by the Sub-committee on Local Conditions of the Committee on Unemployment of the Civic and Commerce Association.

The writer is indebted to Mr. David C. Adie, Assistant Secretary of the Civic and Commerce Association, in charge of the Committee on Unemployment, for generous assistance in the collection of material, and to Mr. Lloyd M. Crograve, Instructor In Economics in the University, for critical supervision throughout the year in the work of gathering and organising the material here presented.

## Chapter One

### THE NEED FOR PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT OFFICES

#### The Problem of Unemployment

Every period of industrial depression in the United States has brought the problem of unemployment strongly into the "lime-light" and has aroused the public to a faint realisation of the tremendous economic and social losses which are consequent upon the enforced idleness of thousands of wage-earners. The problem has been considered, however, as one of relief rather than of prevention. When armies of the unemployed have congregated in our cities, the alarmed public has hastened to organise soup houses, bread lines, and lodging houses, and to put in operation wood-yards, sewing rooms, and other for-the-most-part useless "industries", to relieve unemployment. "The Romans dispensed bread and circuses to their unemployed. We have substituted soup for circuses. That has been our contribution, thus far, toward the ultimate solution of the problem of unemployment."<sup>1</sup>

With the onset of good times and business revival, the public has dropped its fevered activities and relapsed into the normal state of careless indifference. The fact that unemployment is a chronic evil of modern industry, representing, not a want to be satisfied, but a disease to be eradicated, and constituting one of the most perplexing and urgent of industrial problems-- this fact has not been recognised. The actuality of involuntary unemployment, even, has been very tardily admitted, and even yet it is more than half believed that "any man who really wants work can find it." When the unemployed have clamored for work, "we have

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<sup>1</sup> From address by Royal Meeker, Commissioner of the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, before the American Assn. of Public Employment Offices. Proceedings, U.S. Bulletin, No. 192, p. 42.

pointed out to them our stupendous resources, our marvellous economic genius, the majestic magnitude of our industries, and the tremendous velocity of our progress,"<sup>1</sup> and dismissed them with: "No one who really wants work need be idle;" "you can always get work on a farm;" or, in the case of women and girls, "you can always get housework."

But in recent years, especially during the winters of 1913-14 and 1914-15, thinking people have come to mistrust the simple explanation that the only unemployed were those who would not work. Bread lines in the cities held too many men who were not aged, deficient, or shirkers; too many "steady" jobs were lost; too many able workers were unemployed. The 400,000 who were unemployed in New York City in the winter of 1914-15,<sup>2</sup> crowding every public place for shelter, standing all night in line before free soup counters---these were not all "I-won't-work's", unemployables or hoboes, for they ceased to be unemployed when good times returned.

More recently, it has been recognised that unemployment is not spasmodic and uncertain,--or cyclical--only, but a regular phenomenon of modern competitive industry. Industry has become notably irregular and unstable, due not alone to the seasonal character of many lines of production but to the prevalence of the "rush order" system of manufacturing--the demand for goods being subject to sudden and unexpected fluctuations,<sup>3</sup> and, in consequence, the demand for labor power is subject to irregular and inevitable variations. So much is this true that there has developed a pro-

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 43.

<sup>2</sup> See American Labor Legislation Review, Vol. 5, p. 173.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. "The Planlessness of Production," in Business Cycles, by W. C. Mitchell, page 37.

nounced regularity of irregularity of employment. Indeed, its regularity constitutes a principal indictment of the inefficiency and waste prevalent in the present industrial situation. "The tragedy of the situation is that it is just the ordinary, inevitable, steadily recurring situation in every great centre of industry throughout the world."<sup>1</sup> Unemployment is as much a permanent risk of the present chaotic and inconsiderate manner of conducting business as are accidents or occupational diseases.

As soon as the nature of the problem of unemployment became known, people began to take account of its cost. Students of the problem began to make such alarming statements as: "The losses due to unemployment are immensely greater, both in money and in morals, than the losses due to industrial accidents or industrial illness,"<sup>2</sup> and investigations of the results of enforced idleness became common. In the beginning these took the form of ascertaining the losses to the unemployed, economically, physically, and morally considered, and the facts disclosed were those which have now become common knowledge.

#### The Individual and Social Effects of Unemployment

The burden of unemployment, for the wage-earner, takes the form, initially, of a stoppage of income and a consequent reduction of expenditures. Statistics of losses in wages--of the extent of unemployment, even---in the United States are meagre, and have never been fully and accurately compiled because of the practical

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<sup>1</sup> See report of the Municipal Markets Commission, Chicago, 1914, "Practical Plan for Relieving Destitution and Unemployment," p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Royal Meeker, loc. cit., p. 5.

difficulties of computing the number of days lost by each employe. But even if this could be done, the total or the average of the days lost in the different kinds of unemployment would be a mixture of quantities very disparate as to causes and effects. Crude indications of the extent of unemployment, however, have been secured by a number of periodical and special investigations,<sup>1</sup> and estimates of the economic losses to wage-earners based upon the data thus furnished should not be wholly misleading.

Because the 1910 Census data on unemployment have not been published, official figures on the national unemployment problem are seventeen years old. The Census of 1900 showed that 22.3 per cent of all persons in gainful occupations were out of work at some time during the year. More than two and one-half million men and a half-million women were out of work for a period of from four to six months; while a total of one-half million were unemployed seven months or longer. That is, one person in every five was idle for a period varying from one to twelve months.<sup>2</sup> Translated into terms of loss of income, this means that the working classes of the nation probably lost more than one billion dollars of wages for the year. In 1901 the Federal Bureau of Labor made an investigation into the cost of living of 25,440 families of workmen, from thirty-three industrial states, receiving less than \$ 1,200 per year. It

<sup>1</sup> See: Report of the Committee on Unemployment in the State of New York, 1911, p. 27; Webb, Public Organisation of the Labour Market, p. 163; Rowntree and Lasker, Unemployment, p. viii; Sargent, Bulletin of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, No. 109, page 6. Rowntree and Lasker have made a most intensive study of the unemployment found in New York City on one day in the year, but the results may not be a fair basis of generalisation.

<sup>2</sup> These figures are not of much value because of the imperfections in the Census Schedule of Inquiry. The information came from the unemployed themselves who could not possibly report accurately, from memory, the exact number of days lost during the entire year which was the subject of inquiry.

was found that 49.81 per cent of the 24,402 heads of families had been idle for an average period of 9.43 weeks.<sup>1</sup> Assuming the average family income to be \$ 15 per week, the total loss amounted to approximately two million dollars.<sup>2</sup> In the absence of published statistics from the 1910 Census, estimates based on a study of the schedules of a thousand wage-earners from each of six industrial states of the United States show that more than one-third (36.1 % ) were unemployed on an average of 10.8 weeks during the preceding year.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> United States, 18th Annual Report of the Commissioner of Labor, 1903, pp. 41-46.

<sup>2</sup> Figures derived from other sources--state and national- contribute corroborative data as to wage losses. The geological coal survey reports on coal mining for the years 1890 to 1910 show that workmen lost from 22 to 43 per cent of their working time annually in the bituminous mines, and from 23.7 to 50 per cent in the Anthracite mines. Statistics of the New York State Department of Labor for the years 1901-1916, compiled from monthly reports of trade unions (See Table I), shows that a body of skilled workers averaging around 100,000 in number lost 18.6 per cent of their yearly wages due to unemployment. ( State of New York. Bulletin of the Department of Labor, Idleness of Organised Labor in 1916.) Estimated on the conservative basis of \$ 800 per year average wage, this means a loss in wages of almost \$ 15,000,000 annually.

On the basis of data returned by the Federal Census of Manufactures in 1905, taken from the manufacturers' own records, it is fair to estimate that workers in the industries represented lost more than two million dollars during the year from lack of work.

<sup>3</sup> This leaves out of consideration all unemployment that was due to sickness or other incapacity for work such as vacations, loss due to strikes, lockouts, etc., showing that, leaving these out of consideration, there is still a loss of 7.5 per cent of the productive capacity of the entire group under consideration. Of those unemployed, about two-thirds were unemployed more than one month; two-fifths were heads of families; and two-fifths were workers between the ages of twenty and thirty years--just at the age when they should be most valuable as productive agents, and when regular employment is most essential, both for economic and moral reasons.

It may be added that the Census schedules on unemployment in the 1910 Census were more carefully prepared and better instruction given to the Census agents for securing the information. It is to be regretted, therefore, that the Census Bureau has not been able, from lack of funds, to publish the data gathered.

Of more recent date are figures dealing with unemployment in various cities of the United States. In Chicago, in 1911, twenty-two trade unions--the largest in the city-- reported an average loss of 30 per cent of possible earnings.<sup>1</sup> During the general depression in the winter of 1914-1915, every city in the United States reported enormous numbers of the unemployed.<sup>2</sup> In New York the Mayor's Committee on Unemployment calculated that the amount of unemployment in December, 1914, was 200,000 greater than in December, 1913. At the same time the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company made a careful canvass of its industrial policy holders,<sup>3</sup> and, on the basis of data secured, estimated the amount of unemployment at 442,000. To check this result the United States Bureau

<sup>1</sup> The actual average individual earnings within the year were \$ 825, while the possible earnings, if steadily employed, would have been \$ 1235.

<sup>2</sup> St. Louis reported from 75,000 to 80,000 unemployed; Chicago found that 12 per cent of the employable were out of work; Detroit figures revealed that 45 per cent of the men employed at the best seasons of the year were at that time out of employment--a total of over 80,000. (American Labor Legislation Review, November, 1915, Vol. 5, page, 480).

<sup>3</sup> The figures by the Metropolitan are particularly interesting because they give the number of workers on part time, a factor generally overlooked in estimating the numbers affected and the amount of unemployment. Later in 1915, the Metropolitan made a similar canvass of twelve western cities, the results showing an average of 12.9 per cent of unemployment and 20.2 per cent on part time work. The results of the canvass follow:

	Unemployed	On part time
Duluth - - - - -	20.5	17.8
St. Paul - - - - -	14.1	7.4
Minneapolis - - - - -	13.8	5.3
St. Louis - - - - -	13.6	13.7
Chicago - - - - -	13.3	10.5
Kansas City - - - - -	12.5	8.8
Pittsburgh - - - - -	11.1	29.0
Toledo - - - - -	10.7	17.5
Philadelphia - - - - -	10.3	19.6
Boston - - - - -	10.2	17.3
Cleveland - - - - -	9.4	12.3
Milwaukee - - - - -	7.9	28.9
Springfield, Mo. - - - - -	7.1	1.4
Wilkes Barre - - - - -	6.4	32.3
Bridgeport - - - - -	6.3	19.9

of Labor Statistics, in February, 1915, made a Census of 104 sample city blocks and, finding that 16.2 per cent of the wage-earners residing in those blocks were unemployed, calculated that the total number of unemployed wage-earners in New York City would be 398,000.

Data for the whole country are very meagre for this period. However, taking the lowest estimate made of the percentage of unemployment--6.3 per cent--and applying it to the whole United States, we find at least two million wage earners were out of work in the winter of 1914-1915.<sup>2</sup>

It is in the "after effects" of enforced idleness and consequent loss of income, however, that the evils of unemployment show themselves most forcibly. These effects are so apparent as well as real that a bare statement of the more important facts will suffice. As the reports of charitable organisations show, one of the first and most important results of wide spread unemployment is an increase in the number of calls for relief.<sup>3</sup> Two weeks of enforced idleness

<sup>1</sup> For further data on unemployment see: Unemployment in the U.S., U.S. Department of Labor, Bulletin no. 195; Unemployment in New York City, Bulletin no. 172.

<sup>2</sup> This figure is confirmed by Theodore N. Vail, President of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, who stated in his annual report, March 15, 1915, that there were two million persons unemployed in the United States, whose yearly incomes should be at least \$ 1,250,000,000. (Amer. Labor Leg. Rev., 5:483) As many more were unemployed on part time.

What this means to any one city in the way of financial loss may be illustrated by estimates made for Minneapolis by the Sub-committee on Local Conditions of the Committee on Unemployment of the Civic and Commerce Association. The report stated that the purchasing power of wage-earners in Minneapolis in 1914 was probably between 18 and 20 per cent below normal, representing a total loss, directly to the laborers and indirectly to merchants and professional men--of almost one million dollars.

<sup>3</sup> Combined figures from 36 charitable organisations in 29 cities show that, during the six months prior to April 2, 1915, in 29,039 or 48 per cent of the family cases, the chief wage-earner was unemployed at the time of the application, though physically and mentally able to be employed. More striking figures are presented for homeless men out of work. (See: Amer. Labor Leg. Rev., 5:475-6).

suffices, in most instances, to reduce the average wage-earner and his family to a condition of want and distress, and the calls for public and private charity bear a more or less definite ratio to the amount and severity of unemployment.<sup>1</sup>

Unemployment is a shock or crisis,<sup>2</sup> which causes the accustomed habits and standards of morality and industry to break down, especially when it is long continued or frequent and accompanied by loss of wages. In consequence unemployed men tend to have a characteristic attitude either of supine submission and acceptance of conditions, as in applying for charity, or of revolt against the system.<sup>3</sup> The unemployed man easily becomes a revolutionary social-

<sup>1</sup> See Tables I and II and the accompanying Charts. The figures given for unemployment are for union labor only, hence the correlation with public charity relief is not so high as it would be if all unemployment could be shown.

<sup>2</sup> This phase of unemployment illustrates Huxley's statement: "The sense of being useless in the world is the greatest shock the human system can receive." (Quoted in the Survey, Nov. 8, '13, 31:156)

<sup>3</sup> Many of the revolutions of modern times have been due to unemployment. The motto of the French Revolution was "The Right to Work" and the unemployed began the street fights in Paris in 1830. The Paris Commune in 1872 was intimately connected with unemployment. In this country in 1893 Coxy led an army of the unemployed to Washington to demand jobs; in 1908, Boston was confronted with a similar crisis by the demonstrations of a mob of the unemployed under Morrison Swift. (Massachusetts Labor Bulletin, February, 1908, Vol. 58, pages 58-62) In 1914 New York City was the scene of numerous riots, started in most cases by I.W.W. members or their sympathisers, which assumed, at times, such large proportions as to almost defy the efforts of an army of policemen to restore order. Peaceful mass meetings of the thousands of unemployed were broken up by the police and turned into riots and massacres for fear that some organisation would be formed that would be employed in making violent protest against the system that made wholesale unemployment possible.

"No community," says Miss Kellor, "can safely carry large numbers of unemployed men and women, deprived of normal activities, and therefore susceptible to harmful influences, and unable without their earnings to maintain a decent standard of living for themselves and their families." (Out of Work, p. 31.)

TABLE I

State of Unemployment and Public Charity Relief  
in New York, 1902--1914.

Year	Union laborers idle for the year	Cases of temporary public relief	Year aver. % of unemployment	% of unemployment due to lack of work	Cases of relief due to lack of work by head of family	Index of unemployment, 1910 equals 100 per cent	Index of relief--1910 equals 100 per cent
1902	16,776	157,185	13.1	10.6	5,770	67.3	85.9
1903	19,310	143,822	17.3	14.2	6,059	90.0	78.6
1904	55,708	168,703	16.9	12.1	7,872	88.9	91.0
1905	31,638	152,689	11.2	8.5	5,729	58.9	83.5
1906	24,734	120,450	9.3	6.8	4,736	48.9	65.7
1907	55,624	120,627	16.2	13.6	2,871	85.3	65.6
1908	101,466	203,749	29.7	28.0	41,421	156.3	122.4
1909	50,477	207,514	18.6	14.9	34,266	97.6	113.5
1910	58,411	182,878	19.1	13.6	11,211	100.0	100.0
1911	66,021	273,412	21.1	18.7	29,770	111.0	149.5
1912	42,395	257,306	17.3	15.2	35,162	91.1	140.6
1913	121,149	291,084	25.3	20.9	41,864	123.6	159.2
1914	165,145	496,719	28.9	27.5	171,485	152.1	271.1

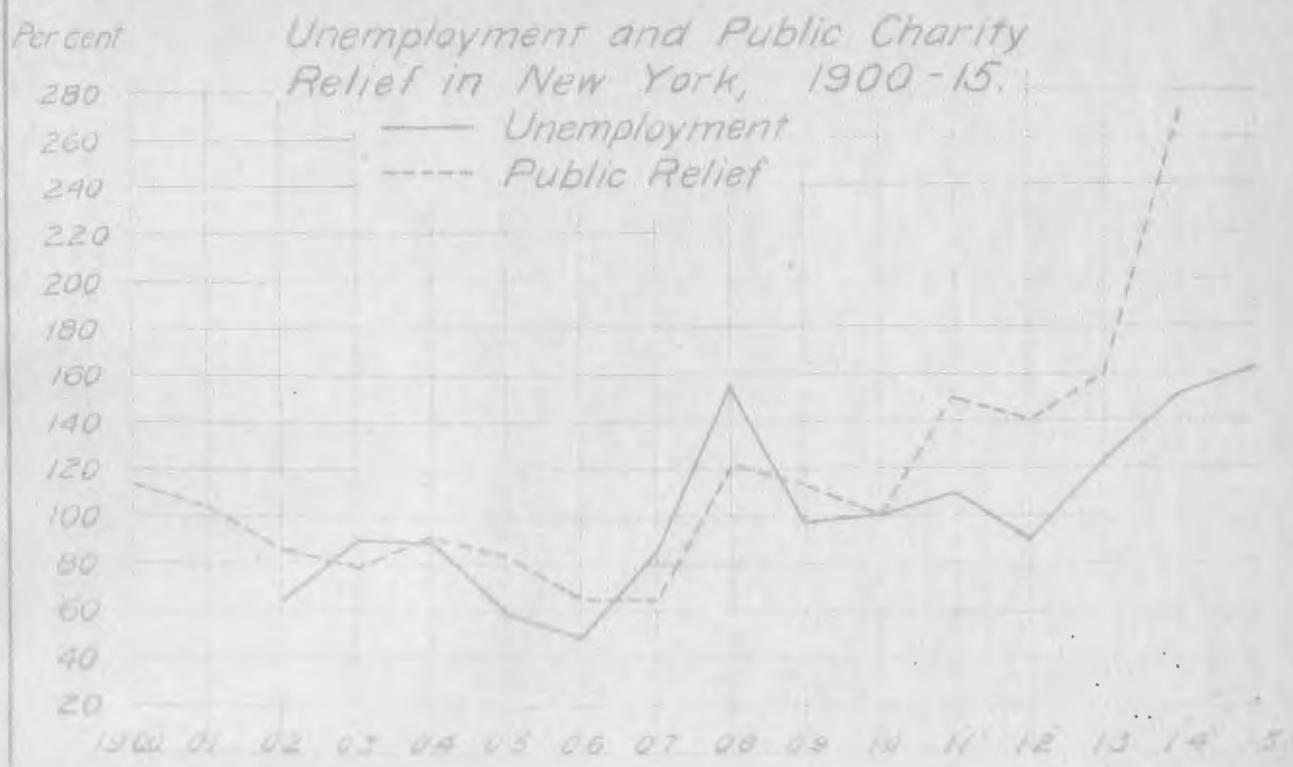
TABLE II

Showing State of Unemployment and Public  
Charity Relief in Massachusetts,  
1908---1914.

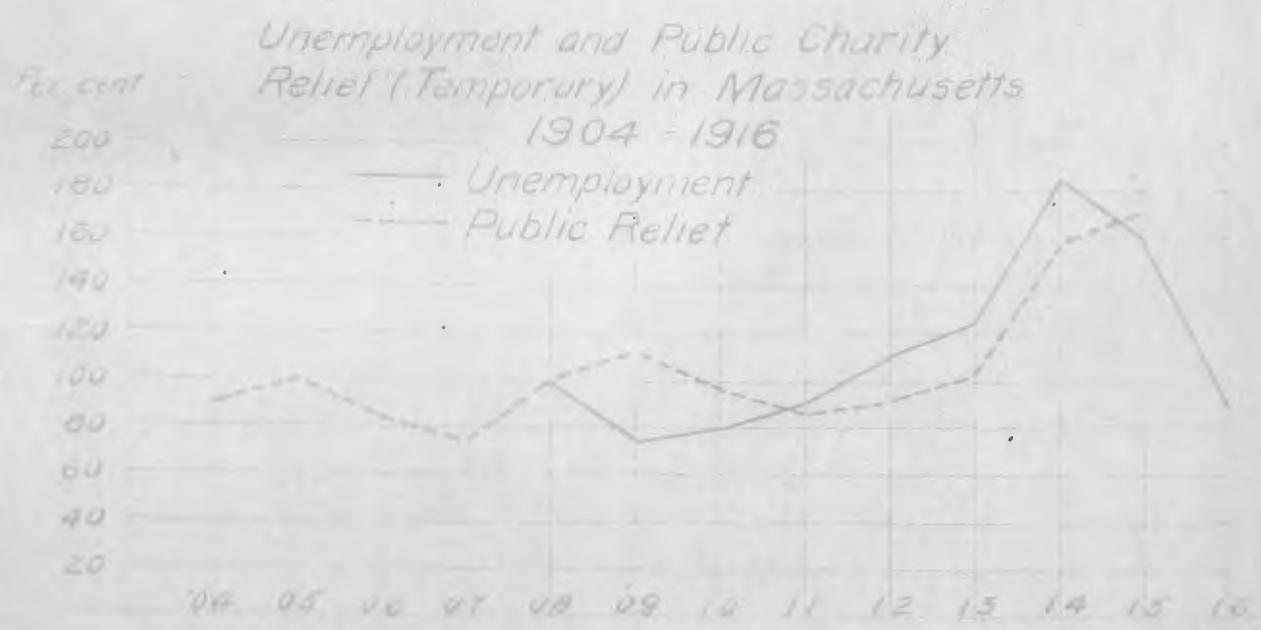
Year	Year av. (%)	Total idle	Cases of relief	Index of unemployment	Index of relief
1908	14.2	11,435	69,169	100.0	100.0
1909	8.0	8,542	78,123	74.9	113.2
1910	7.5	8,980	67,009	78.7	96.9
1911	8.1	10,330	59,358	90.6	85.9
1912	8.3	13,873	62,357	115.5	90.2
1913	8.7	15,232	71,423	133.6	103.3
1914	13.0	21,007	109,094	184.2	157.9
1915	10.7	18,116	120,905	158.8	172.0
1916	5.9*	9,902*		87.3*	

\* For nine months only.

1.



2.



ist or a follower of some other creed which expresses a revolt against unemployment. If there is no organised way of expressing this revolt, idleness results in such forms as vagrancy, theft, intemperance, vice and crime.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, the unemployed who cease to struggle against the system and accept it in a helpless, hopeless fashion--at first unable to secure work after repeated efforts--they soon come to refuse work when it is offered, unless it is for a few days only; their physical skill and fitness for work deteriorate rapidly, and their habits of industry become almost entirely lacking.<sup>2</sup> Eventually, and all too soon, they drop into the ranks of casual labor or the unemployables,<sup>3</sup> for nothing degenerates so rapidly from lack of use as the capacity for work.

Unemployment has also more overt effects from the point of view of the family. The uncertainty and, at times, total lack of income demoralises house-keeping methods and lowers the standard of living, frequently to the point of physical suffering.<sup>4</sup> The unemployment of men forces wives and children into industry--frequently into sweated labor- to supplement the family income. The children are under-nourished, stunted, inadequately clothed, morally weak, and lack industrial opportunity. As a result they tend to enter "blind alley" occupations, and finally become casual laborers, "job-tramps," vagrants, or criminals.<sup>5</sup> Sidney Webb, writing of con-

<sup>1</sup> See: Solenberger, Alice W., One Thousand Homeless Men, pp. 139-155. The lodging houses, saloons, and general environment of homeless and unemployed men, as Mrs. Solenberger has pointed out, are important factors in the personal deterioration of the men; this applies also to the unemployed who are not homeless.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Report on Conditions of Employment in the Iron and Steel Industries, Vol. III, p. 380.

<sup>3</sup> Solenberger, op. cit., pp. 139-155; Rowntree and Lasker, op. cit., pp. 94-137, 172-193; also article by Powderly, T.V., American Labor Legislation Review, Vol. II, p. 111.

<sup>4</sup> New York. Report of the Committee on Unemployment, 1911, pp. 9, 28.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 9; Rowntree and Lasker, op. cit., pp. 7-16.

ditions in England, says that while the class of workers subject most to unemployment constitutes only one-tenth of the population, it is responsible for four-fifths of the problems with which the public charity, health, and police officers have to deal.<sup>1</sup>

#### The Cost of Unemployment to the Employer

As long as unemployment was considered a burden only upon the unemployed individuals and, in a general way, upon society, very little was done to prevent it. But the startling discovery has been lately made that the cost of unemployment is not borne altogether by the unemployed--the employer of labor helps to pay the bill and can by no means shift the burden. A large army of reserve or unemployed labor has, in the past, been considered necessary for the conduct of industry and has been fostered by business interests and by business methods.<sup>2</sup> But the enlightened employer is finding that the irregular employment of workers, the seasonal firing of men and the hasty hiring of new men in time of need, are not unmixed blessings, but, rather, entail enormous costs to his business. He is discovering that he must bear part of the cost of the loss of skill and efficiency of workers consequent upon unemployment in the form of limited output, inferior products, and increased cost of production.<sup>3</sup> In competitive industry the

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Kellor, op. cit., p. 31.

<sup>2</sup> The Wall Street Journal in 1911 referred to unemployment as a necessary, inevitable, and desirable restriction on the cost of production. (See: Amer. Lab. Leg. Rev., 2:95) This view--that unemployment is necessary in order to regulate wages and population is the classical economic doctrine.

<sup>3</sup> For another point of view see: R.G. Valentine, "What the Awakened Employer is Thinking About Unemployment," Amer. Labor Leg. Rev., June, 1915, Vol. 5, pp. 423-428.

There is also a loss to all employers, directly or indirectly, and to other business and professional men from the decreased purchasing power of the wage-earners out of employment.

employer must bear the burden of misfit, disinterested, mal-content and inefficient labor; and the waste of men through lost time, increased labor turn-over, loss of skill, and the cost of supervision of new men--these costs, because they have not been checked up, are beyond calculation.<sup>1</sup> The most serious cost to the employer, however, arises from the difficulty--in many cases the impossibility--of securing skilled, efficient labor when it is needed.

When this discovery--that unemployment was costly for industry and reduced business profits--was added to the already perceived evils of an individual and social nature, the entire community or nation rose up and began to demand constructive, permanent measures of reform. In the meantime, students of the problem had been earnestly at work classifying the causes of unemployment and determining the point of attack upon the problem. They concluded that unemployment represented, not an immeasurable and irredeemable failure of the existing social system, but incompleteness of organization at certain points--particularly in the business problem of organizing and maintaining adequately the reserve forces of labor.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In some few instances the cost of training new workmen for their jobs has been roughly worked out, so that employers are able to count the cost, in this particular, of indiscriminate hiring and firing of men,--but this is very rare. For example, a large laundry company in Minneapolis finds that it takes from one to four weeks to "break in" a green hand at even the less skilled work, and that, during this period, the green hand accomplishes only about one-half of the work of a skilled employe. Yet this firm has a labor turn-over of almost 300 per cent per year. A large wholesale manufacturing company, with a yearly turnover of 65 per cent, estimated that it takes three years in some cases to train employes, but the firm had given no thought to the costliness of the turnover. Another company, employing an office force of 80 persons, found that it cost \$ 40 to train a new employe, yet its turnover amounted to over one-third of the entire force each year.

<sup>2</sup> Such a definition of the problem of unemployment necessarily excludes those factors ascribable to causes outside of industry, such as old age, sickness, or other physical incapacity; defects in

### Public Employment Offices Advocated

For a solution of the problem of organising the labor market, those who have studied the problem advocate the establishment of public employment offices as the first step to be taken. The function assigned to these institutions, as indicated, is that of bringing together in one centre or system of cooperating centres all the demands for and supplies of labor. This means a centralisation and unification of the means of securing employment; it means an "institutional facilitation of controlled mobility of labor," on the basis of complete and regular information, to replace the present aimless wandering in search of work. It implies, also, the abolition of distinct, disparate, non-cooperating centres of employment. It would assist workmen to secure work in their regular occupations and in other industries as well, resulting in an inter-industrial and inter-occupational organisation comparable to what Professor Veblen has described as the "concatenation of industrial processes" which has developed between different establishments in the production of commodities.<sup>1</sup> Thus, the public employment office is expected to do for labor what the grain exchange has done for the grain market.

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character which make men unemployable; or such indirect factors as politics, monopoly of land, the tariff, trusts, and war. These are, for the most part, un-measurable in their influence and, except in the case of war, of slight influence and importance in causing unemployment. All unemployment due to personal causes must be considered as a problem of relief, rather than a problem of industry. It is difficult, of course, to draw a distinct line dividing unemployment due to personal causes from that caused by industrial organisation--or lack of organisation. In most cases the former is a result, as has been shown, of the latter, though the element of time enters in.

<sup>1</sup> Veblen, Thorstein B., The Theory of Business Enterprise, (1904) pages 20-65.

## Mal-adjustments in Industry

Can the public employment office accomplish this task?

Before the question can be answered, discussion must revert back to the causes of unemployment--to an analysis of the factors which make for incompleteness of organisation and mal-adjustments in industry. The elements in the situation are both positive and negative: the general factor of irregularity in industry, as noted before, on the one hand, and the lack of organisation of the labor market on the other. To these must be added the factors, not completely included in either, of the improper placement of workers, and the lack of vocational guidance.<sup>1</sup>

(1) An important factor in the long-run regularity and irregularity of industry is business depression, a regularly recurring phenomenon of the business cycle, caused by the cumulative development of many closely inter-related factors affecting business profits. In times of depression men are thrown out of employment by hundreds of thousands, but no adequate remedy for the prevention of such depressions has ever been proposed.

(2) Closely related to cyclical fluctuations as causes of unemployment are seasonal fluctuations, only more regular in point of time. From the nature of the industries, climatic conditions, and the seasonal nature of the demand for the product, employment is regularly irregular. In most instances the winter months are usually

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<sup>1</sup> These are causes of unemployment as well as are the other factors, but they are also important, particularly the first, as causes of inefficiency and hence loss to the employer, employe, and the community.

slack. For the United States as a whole, the lowest percentage of employment comes from November to March, while the greatest employment is from June to October. Some industries depend upon even more uncertain conditions than the weather--such as fashions and tastes--or are so closely dependent upon other industries as to have no existence apart from them. In addition to such fluctuations, firms are failing every day, some suspend operations indefinitely, and thousands of workers are set adrift.<sup>1</sup>

(3) Of the mal-adjustments less obviously due to industrial conditions, that existing between the demand for and supply of labor in different localities and between different sections of the same city is the most noticeable. This may be due to the rise or fall of particular firms, to the in-rush of laborers due to misleading advertisements of opportunities for employment, or, where a scarcity occurs, to a lack of knowledge of opportunities. But even where such knowledge exists, the mal-adjustment may persist because of the <sup>in</sup>mobility of labor. Many wage-earners will accept some unemployment or under-employment rather than leave home and family. Again, lack of funds to pay transportation is often a deciding factor.

(4) Another type of mal-adjustment is that existing between different industries. Some are over-crowded, making wages low, and men are constantly out of employment, while another industry may be needing workers. In many cases, perhaps, this is only a local condition and no industry, taken over a broad enough territory, might be crowded; but the opposite may be true equally as well. The causes of this condition are many: juveniles enter industry

<sup>1</sup> See report on fluctuations in New York City, in Report of the Mayor's Committee on Unemployment, 1916, pp. 54 ff.

unadvised and offer themselves for the work nearest at hand; immigration may take a turn toward a particular industry, etc. The general cause, however, is lack of information as to opportunities in each particular trade as compared with others.

(5) Improper placing of workers--due in the first instance to the lack of any means for their proper classification--is a cause of unemployment and of loss to industry which is often overlooked. The present indiscriminate methods of hiring men, usually <sup>after</sup> only a cursory, superficial examination, makes inevitable the employment of incapable men and the placing of able men at jobs to which they are not suited. The result is unsatisfactory service, discontented, inefficient workers, and, in the end, wholesale discharges or voluntary quitting of men. Thus a furious round of hiring and firing is kept up by many firms--with the effect of increasing unemployment and piling up an enormous labor-turnover cost for the industry. The lack of vocational guidance is a contributing factor here, since young workers get into occupations unsuited to their abilities, or into blind alleys, and, soon becoming dissatisfied, break loose and swell the ranks of the unemployed.

(6) Finally, there is a great deal of unemployment due to the failure of the employer seeking help to connect with the worker looking for a job. That is, the supply of labor and the demand for labor do not meet and offset each other. This mal-adjustment is a result of the lack of organization of the labor market,--to the lack of any satisfactory agencies for controlling the labor market, and to the particularly haphazard methods now in use for securing help and finding employment.

In these six general ways, mal-adjustments manifest themselves in the industrial world as causes of unemployment, and

advocates of the establishment of public employment offices take the stand that these are the principal causes. Here an appeal must be made to the facts. Do these types of mal-adjustment, as theoretically formulated, actually exist, and, if so, to what extent are they the causes of unemployment?

#### Does Mal-adjustment Exist? To What Extent?

In answering these questions, no attempt can be made to determine or separate each of the six types of maladjustment noted or to give statistical data as to the extent to which each is a cause of unemployment and loss in industry. No cause of unemployment operates separately and no unemployment situation can be traced definitely to any single source. There are no statistics of the actual number of men unemployed, except such as were given in the earlier pages of this chapter, and these dealt with the amount of unemployment due to all causes, extra-industrial as well as industrial. In two states, however, attempts have been made to classify and evaluate the various causes of unemployment. In New York, among organized wage-earners, 92 per cent of all unemployment from July to December, 1913, was due to lack of work entirely. For the entire period of 1904 to 1914, the percentage is even higher.<sup>1</sup> Massachusetts publishes data of the same sort, showing an equally high percentage of all unemployment caused by the lack of work. For other proof of the existence and extent of mal-adjustment in this connection, recourse is often had to a comparison of trade union statistics of unemployment with newspaper or other popular assertions as to demand for labor. Thus, it is found that some members of the union are unemployed at all times

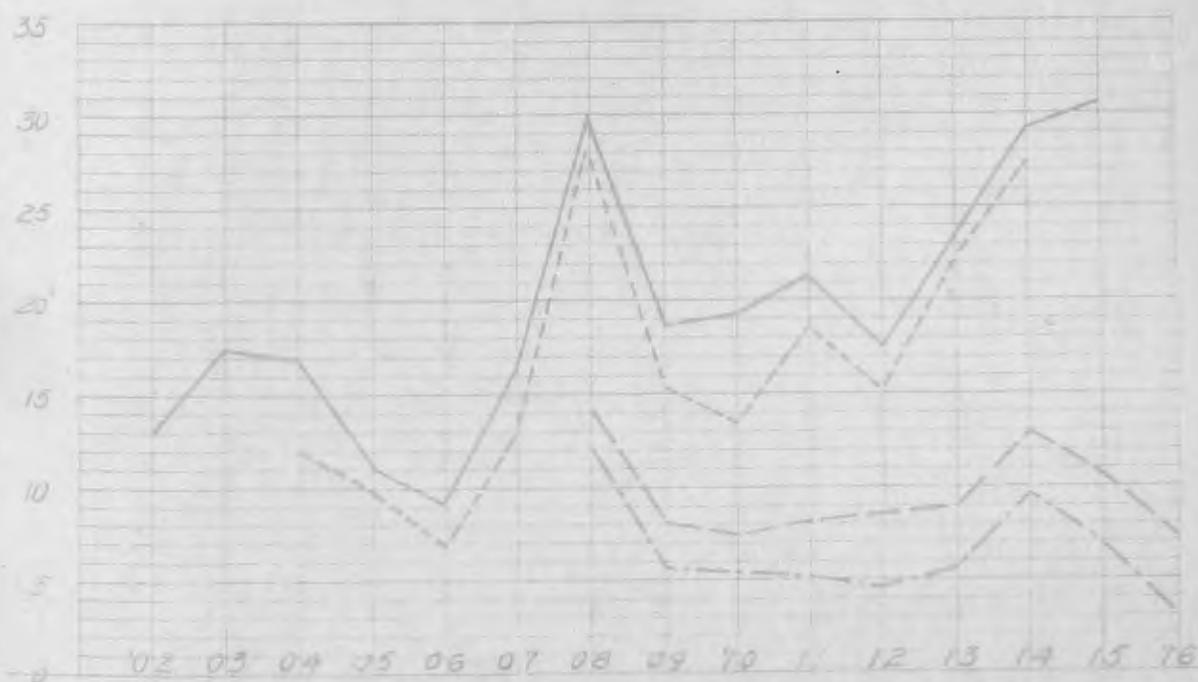
<sup>1</sup> See Table III and Chart III. Data are taken from New York, Bureau of Labor Bulletin, Idleness of Organized Wage-earners, 1916.

TABLE III

Idleness of Organised Wage-earners in the State  
of New York, Years 1904-1914.

Year	Idleness Due to: All Causes	Idleness Due to: Lack of Work
1904	16.9	12.1
1905	11.2	8.5
1906	9.3	6.8
1907	16.2	13.6
1908	29.7	28.0
1909	18.6	14.9
1910	19.1	13.6
1911	21.1	18.7
1912	17.3	15.2
1913	25.3	20.9
1914	28.9	27.5
<b>Average, 1904-14</b>	<b>18.6</b>	<b>16.3</b>

Per cent.



Percentage of Idle Wage Earners in Representative Trade Unions of New York and Massachusetts  
Yearly Averages 1904-1916

- New York - All causes
- - - New York - Lack of work
- Massachusetts - All causes
- - - Massachusetts - Lack of work

during the year, while employers are advertising for help. These statistics, it may be noted, are not of inability to secure work alone, but may be complicated by a desire to loaf a few days, or by trade union standards which prevent union men from working at jobs outside their trade. Certainly there are no reliable statistics of the demand for labor.

Since, then, there are no statistical data as to the actual existence and extent of any particular type of mal-adjustment or of all types taken together,--in particular no figures as to the demand for labor--we must rely upon the opinions and estimates of authorities and investigators. Fortunately, here there is great unanimity of opinion.

Mr. W. M. Leiserson, than whom no other man is more conversant with unemployment in this country, says that unemployment is entirely a problem of mal-adjustment and that, in the United States, at least, there is no permanent surplus of labor in excess of demand.<sup>1</sup> A surplus may exist in some localities or in some industries, but, considering the maximum of demand of all employers, there is no evidence of a surplus. The trouble is that the demand is not steady, but fluctuates with seasons and other varying factors. The problem is closely akin, he thinks, to the engineer's difficulty in an electric plant. The machinery must be able to carry the greatest load which may be demanded, but much of the time runs at one-half or one-fourth capacity.

This view--that mal-adjustment is not general over-supply--

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<sup>1</sup> "Public Employment Offices and Unemployment," American Labor Legislation Review, Vol. 4, p. 326.

is concurred in by others. Says Devine: "Economists, trade unionists, social workers, and government and state officials who have had to deal with labor questions, are firmly convinced that surplus labor is a feature of congested communities and not a general phenomenon, that in ordinary times an urgent demand for both skilled and unskilled labor may exist, and does exist, in many communities at the very moment when the unemployed are congregating in other communities, and especially that labor is needed on farms at the very times when the already over-crowded cities are increasing in population."<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Sidney Webb wrote: "Unemployment in large cities can only in a restricted sense be said to be caused by mere failure of employers to find workmen or of workmen to find employers. They do find each other now . . . , but only after some delay. If there were no unemployment, in the sense of there being exactly as many vacancies as men to fill them, there would still be a certain proportion of time lost in shifting situations. This . . . would appear in the statistics as a percentage of unemployed. The experience of the best organized trades in England, at the very busiest times, rather points to the fact that the minimum of unemployment, . . . , due to lost time in shifting from job to job, and analogous cases, may amount to something like one per cent of the whole working class population, indicating an average loss, from this cause alone, of three days per annum."<sup>2</sup>

In the United States, Census returns, manufacturing statistics, and special investigations<sup>3</sup> all reveal the intermittent character of the demand for labor which necessitates a reserve of labor

<sup>1</sup> This is a generalisation based on written opinions from such men as Professors E.A. Ross, F.A. Fetter, E.L. Bogart, J.B. Clark, H.J. Davenport, H.R. Seager, Sidney Webb, and others. (See Devine: Employment Bureau in New York City, p. 6 ff.) Professor Clark was emphatic that the loss of employment by large bodies of men personally fit for it was due to mal-adjustment. Mr. F.L. Baldwin, prominent attorney of Ohio, wrote: "Unemployment in our large cities is invariably due to mal-adjustment. Men out of work find it difficult to obtain employment in their own neighborhood or to look for work elsewhere, because of lack of information." (*Ibid.*, p. 44) Another writes: "Even in periods of active trade there is by no means a complete adjustment between seekers after work and opportunities for employment, even within the city (N.Y.)."

<sup>2</sup> Devine, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

<sup>3</sup> Of particular value in this connection is the report of the Mayor's Committee on Unemployment, New York City, 1916, and the Report of the Commission on Unemployment in the State of New York, 1911. The latter found, in good times as well as in bad, wage-earners, able and willing to work, who could not secure employment, and also that, along with a great amount of unemployment, there was, nevertheless, a considerable unsatisfied demand for labor--presenting the almost contradictory situation of the jobless man on the one hand and the manless job on the other. To quote a single

employed not steadily, but shifting from place to place. They also sufficiently establish the fallacy in the frequent assertion that all men who want work can obtain it.<sup>1</sup> Even if, at the best seasons of the best years, industrially, all who wanted work were employed, some would be out of work the next week or the next month and many more the following year. Those who become unemployed, of course, would be the less efficient, but if all were equally capable, some would lose their jobs because industry could not use them.

It can hardly be doubted, from such evidence, that there exists a great deal of mal-adjustment in industry and in the labor market. It is not so obvious or so well known how the improper placing of men and the lack of proper guidance of juvenile workers<sup>2</sup>

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statement: "On any given day at least three per cent of our wage-earners are involuntarily idle. Usually there are ten per cent, and in times of depression, the number rises to 30 per cent. These idle men must always be on hand to meet the fluctuating demands of the industries of the state." The Commission also found that four out of every ten wage-earners worked irregularly and were forced to seek employment at least once and probably many times during each year. The Mayor's committee, in 1916, assumed the same general situation and gave its attention to causes and constructive remedies of the evils recognised.

<sup>1</sup> In Chicago, during 1914, when there was little more than the usual amount of unemployment, the Mayor's Committee on Unemployment sent out a vigorous, energetic young man to all the large employers throughout the state in an effort to find jobs for the thousands of men who could not get work. He found jobs for 250 persons in two months-- and lost his own. The project was an utter failure, but it proved the committee's contention that "every man can't get a job if he wants it."

<sup>2</sup> This factor is discussed at some length later in the section on The Juvenile Branch, and will not be gone into here. The general results have been indicated in the discussion, earlier in this chapter, of the effects of unemployment.

For further discussion, see: Alice P. Barrows, "Report of the Vocational Guidance Survey," in Fourteenth Annual Report of City Superintendent of Schools, New York City, 1912; Beveridge, Unemployment, a problem of industry, pp. 125-6, 212-214; Anne Davis, Occupations and Industries open to Children between the Fourteen and Sixteen Years of Age. Board of Education, Chicago, 1914; Halsey, Olga S., "Directing the Life Work of English Children," Survey, May 16, 1914, 32:195-6.

contributes to unemployment and to losses to the employer, the individual, and the general public.

The fact of enormous labor turnovers and the cost to employers has already been mentioned,<sup>3</sup> with examples. Many other cases might be cited,<sup>1</sup> but it is sufficient to state that the resulting shifting of workers and the accompanying unemployment reaches enormous proportions.<sup>2</sup> The causes of this condition are many,<sup>4</sup> but the chief cause is that of the unfitness of the men employed for the positions they hold. Harrington Emerson has said that, of every ten jobs, probably only one is filled by the man who ought to have it, and that, of any ten men, probably one one is doing the work for which he is best fitted.<sup>5</sup> But behind this fact of unfitness is the fundamental and more important fact that unfitness is due to improper placing of workers, a defect which can be largely eliminated. The employer or foreman lacks the requisite skill and knowledge-- and time-- for hiring men, and lacks insight in placing them, This, in turn, is a result of the haphazard way in which the hiring is done. The employer may need a few men. To

<sup>1</sup> For example, the Ford Motor Company of Detroit, in 1913, with 13,000 employes, had a labor turnover of 56,000 in workers fired, laid off, or voluntarily quitting. (This was reduced to 7,000 in 1915 for 15,000 employes, and, in the six months prior to October 1, 1915, only 7 men were discharged, though many quit. See: Proceedings, Employment Managers Association, U.S. Bulletin 196.)

In New York, according to Mr. Chas. B. Barnes, many companies, employing from 1000 to 1500 men, hire in the course of a year 5,000 to 7,000 people to keep this normal force at work. (See U.S. Bulletin 192, p. 107).

<sup>2</sup> The Superintendent of the Women's Department of the Brooklyn, New York Public Employment Office, reports that thousands of women change jobs every day in normal times, out of the 170,000 working women of Brooklyn. (Ibid., p. 122.)

<sup>3</sup> See Ante, p. 11, footnote.

<sup>4</sup> Among them are: ignorance of its cost and extent; foreman is too busy to choose men properly and supervise them carefully; religious or racial prejudices; bad shop management, forcing laying off of men; voluntary quitting, on account of unsatisfactory conditions.

<sup>5</sup> See address by Boyd Fisher, Proceedings Empl. Managers Assn. U.S. Bul. 196.

secure them, he advertises: "Apply at the Gates." Next morning he finds a clamoring mob outside. Under the circumstances there is little opportunity to pick the men properly. As a result, the foreman, in disgust, usually picks a few men from the front ranks, and the chance that the men will be suitable is small indeed. If they do not prove satisfactory in a few days, they are discharged and the process repeated. Under the circumstances, more men will be hired than necessary, and, when the fact becomes apparent, a large part of the force is often temporarily laid off. Later, when the work resumes, the employer seeks wildly for men for high-priced, skilled work, generally without success. Thus the bad placing of workers, the consequent shifting and unemployment, and, at times, the futile searching by employers for needed help--these represent a maladjustment in industry that is of first importance.

Finally, and not least in importance, there is a type of mal-adjustment due strictly to the lack of organisation of the labor market--to the absence of a well organised system for bringing men and jobs together. This factor of the general situation is of so great importance that it deserves extensive treatment.

#### Present Methods of Marketing Labor

In marked contrast to the methods in use in the sale and distribution of other commodities, labor is still hawked from place to place and each individual must dispose of his own. There is an almost total lack of organisation of the labor market. In consequence, and because of the far-reaching organisation of industry, the individual worker cannot acquire the information he needs to secure steady employment at the work he can do best. Though able, willing, and skilled, he often cannot find work. Another and more

serious result is that many thousands of children, at fourteen years or younger, enter the industrial field and offer their labor for sale, not at work for which they are fitted and in which they have a chance to "get on" but, generally, at the first job which turns up. Thousands of women, also, offer their labor power at many points in the industrial field without direction or assistance, and the same is true of immigrants, who enter with the additional handicaps of ignorance of language, customs, and living standards.

The national, state, and city governments have taken little interest, so far, in providing market facilities for labor. The federal government maintains a department to develop agriculture and help market crops; most states do the same and spend large sums to educate their people to such worthy ends; cities maintain free markets of all kinds and "food markets" command and are given the best intelligence and organization possible. But the labor market, the most important of all, has been neglected and almost ignored.

The activities of the national government in regard to the distribution of labor are limited to the operation of the National Division of Information for Immigrants, established in the last few years. Its purpose is the distribution of aliens among the states and to give them information as to opportunities. In 1915 a national system of employment exchanges was authorized to be operated in connection with the Immigration Bureau. It utilizes the existing machinery of the Bureau and of the Post Office for receiving applications for employment and referring idle men to positions. The entire country is divided into eighteen zones, with a central office in each and branch offices where necessary. In all about 77 branches have been established. Applications from employers and employes are received either directly, or indirectly through the Post Office.

The most prominent feature of this work of the national government is the provision for close cooperation with the National Farm Labor Exchange, which has lately been organized by the Labor Commissioners of the states in the Wheat Belt, to supply men at harvest time. At the First National Conference on Unemployment, held in San Francisco in August, 1915, a plan was drawn up whereby all city, state, and federal employment bureaus should be "linked together in one unending chain of opportunity for the unemployed." To date, however, several links in the chain are lacking. In fact, though a committee was appointed to work out plans, no report has yet been made.

The results of federal activity and the methods used have not been of great value. The Immigration Bureau has not been efficient in settling aliens permanently. Rather, it gets them short jobs and makes them into "job tramps" and casuals. Opportunities for employment were numerous enough, but the Bureau could not put this knowledge before the unemployed immigrants. The lack of a system of cheap transportation, however, was perhaps the chief hindrance to a much wider distribution of aliens.<sup>1</sup> Some of the features of the system of employment offices are good, but operations to date have not been conspicuously successful. The zone system is sound; the success of the zone system of the Federal Reserve Banks proves this. The operation of the system by the Bureau of Immigration, however, tends to keep workmen from using it, thinking that it is intended only for immigrants. Cooperation with other public employment systems has not been developed, and private agencies doing an interstate business have not been regulated. The system of registering applicants does not provide the necessary personal contact for the selection of capable workmen, and the immigrant inspectors are not likely to be properly qualified for such work. A national

<sup>1</sup> See article by Powderly, T.V., Chief, Div. of Information, in Amer. Labor. Leg. Rev., Vol. 2, p. 111 ff.

employment system should not have to depend upon the exigencies of the general immigration service. Finally, the system, to attain efficiency, must develop some form of cheap transportation and must have advisory boards, national and local, composed of employers and employees, to promote the work and secure the cooperation and patronage of employers and the public.<sup>1</sup>

Organization of the labor markets within the boundaries of states has not been much more successfully accomplished than the organization of the national labor market. The reasons for this will be developed later. New York has the only system which is making very successful attempts at thorough organization. It has secured real cooperation among the five offices of the state and with the municipal bureau in New York City. It supervises all private agencies and prescribes the reports they must make of their operations. Wisconsin has the same system in operation, but lacks the employee and funds to make its organization as effective. Massachusetts has good single offices in several cities, but there is little cooperation between them and there is little regulation of private agencies even by competition. Illinois supports eight offices, but there is an almost total lack of cooperation between them. They serve low class labor for the most part and their operations have had little effect upon the general labor market.

But a state is not a logical industrial unit and a state's labor resources can only be controlled when the labor market in each city has been organized. And the lack of organization within the cities is the most distressing fact of the whole problem of unemployment. Two examples will suffice--the situations in New York

<sup>1</sup> The criticisms are those advanced by the U.S. Commission on Industrial Relations, See Final Report, 1915, p. 180.

City and in Minneapolis.

The lack of organisation in New York City is displayed very clearly by the fact that, in 1914, there were eight hundred private employment agencies in operation, with no central clearing house, and all reaching the same sources of supply, with little or no knowledge of the activities of others and no obligation to report to any governmental agency. In addition, there were two hundred philanthropic, civic, benevolent, racial and religious organisations engaged in employment work, with similar <sup>dis-</sup> regard for each other's activities and methods. One hundred bankers, steamship ticket agents, and others acted as "padroni", steerers, and agents for the placing of workers. All newspapers carrying want ads were self-constituted employment agencies. The State participated in the scramble through the New York State Agricultural Bureau and the State Immigration Bureau, and the federal government did its "little bit" through the Division of Information branch office. And, besides all these channels of employment, each large trade union maintained its local labor centre for its members and each industrial establishment had its waiting list or hund signs in its windows when help was wanted, thus keeping its group of hangers-on at the door, instead of drawing from a common reserve.

To meet this situation there was an almost total lack of remedial organisation. Three large organisations were studying unemployment unknown to each other. Five hundred churches were giving attention, independently, to one or more phases of the problem. A new committee was organised each day to study some part of the subject and set out upon its labors without any attempt to profit by the information secured by others, by their successes or their failures. Thus there was, on the one hand, a body of unemployed

ranging from 200,000 to 400,000, and, on the other, the agencies for handling the situation presenting a body of effort quite as indeterminate and disorganised as was the body of labor.<sup>1</sup>

In Minneapolis the situation is little better. Thirty-four private agencies supply male help, eight furnish female help, and seven deal with both. All operate independently of each other, with no clearing house provisions, and without effective regulation by the state or the city. Twenty philanthropic, civic, benevolent, racial and religious organisations also do employment work, mostly for common labor bordering upon relief work. Dozens of saloons act as employment centres in a small way, the proprietor, in each case, acting as agent in distributing information about jobs to his patrons. A branch of the Immigration Bureau operates in the Twin Cities, and the State Agricultural Bureau gives some attention to the distribution of farm labor. A few local trade unions are well enough organised to obtain work for their members. Each large industry runs, in effect, its own employment office, keeping large waiting lists in reserve. Finally, there is the Minnesota Free Employment Office. But it is merely another employment office and does not compare favorably with even the better class of private agencies. It is little used, except by low grade labor, and has no relations with any other agencies, local or state.<sup>2</sup>

As a result of this almost total <sup>lack of</sup> organisation in methods of marketing labor, the unemployed lose a great deal of time searching aimlessly for work, or go to a 'fee' agency for a chance to get a short time job at low pay. Employers are unable, for the most

<sup>1</sup> This discussion follow Kellor, op. cit., p. 150 ff.

<sup>2</sup> These facts concerning local conditions are taken from the Report of the Sub-committee on Local Conditions of the Committee on Unemployment of the Minneapolis Civic and Commerce Association, 1916.

part, to secure satisfactory help, and the public pays the bills in higher prices and the cost of supporting relief and charity organisations.

Methods Used in Securing Help and in Finding Employment--in Use in Minneapolis

The most common method of securing help and of securing employment, in many lines of work, is the "want ad" in the daily newspaper. Most want ads used are "blind" ads, calculated to bring to the door a large number of workers, from whom it would be possible to pick a satisfactory employe. In a majority of cases the results have been unsatisfactory, and, in general, this method of securing help is used as a necessary last resort. It is haphazard and uneconomical, and only by chance is the right man secured. Besides, it wastes much time, both for the employer and the prospective employe.<sup>1</sup> "Chance application at the plant" is another commonly used method of securing help and of securing employment. Employers wait for workers to apply at the door of the factory or plant and select those who seem fit. For the worker this means an endless tramping from one place to another, applying everywhere, whether he knows men are wanted or not. For the employer it means the same haphazard selection of workers which characterized the results of the want ad, except that they are magnified. And yet, according to one authority, sixty per cent of all workers over the whole country are hired in this way.<sup>2</sup> The employer using this method has a very narrow range of selection, and, for the labor market, it means an

<sup>1</sup> The results of an investigation carried on by the local Civic and commerce Association in 1915 disclosed the fact that 63 per cent of the firms making returns used want ads to some extent--in most cases to secure skilled labor only. At times, when a firm advertised for one man, fifty applied for the position.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Leiserson, "Public Employment Offices in Theory and Practice," U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Bulletin 192, p. 316.

over-supply in some places and a shortage in others. The old time "card in the window" method of securing working men is still tolerated and occasionally used by many firms to secure applicants. Because it depends wholly upon the chance passer-by, the likelihood of getting a satisfactory worker is small indeed. However, it is used only in emergency or, at times, to secure casual laborers. The "recommendations of friends" is another plan much employed, particularly among the smaller firms. The defect here is that employees unduly urge the qualifications of their friends and the range of choice is exceedingly small.

The commercial bureaus are much used in Minneapolis, especially for clerical help, but are of unequal merit. However, they are the best type of employment bureaus to be found in the city. Most business schools and commercial colleges attempt to place their students in the city, and Dunwoody Institute has agreements with various employers for "taking on" its graduates. Domestic bureaus are also in operation and have more calls for help than they can fill.

Trade union employment work is not strongly developed in Minneapolis because trade union organization is not strong. In a few cases unions are very useful to their members, however. The railroad brotherhoods are helpful to trainmen in securing positions, and, in the building trades, construction men are sometimes supplied by the unions. Most of the local unions make no attempt at placement.

As indicated before, many charitable, civic, racial and religious organizations maintain employment bureaus. They operate on a small scale, being chiefly concerned with persons on the verge of dependence, and are a very small factor in the total employment situation. The Associated Charities aids heads of families in securing work, advances transportation, places handicapped workers,

in connection with its relief work. The Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A. serve their members and the attendants at night schools. The Settlement houses, the Salvation Army, and other agencies of this sort, work with the half-employables, mostly, and deal mainly with casual laborers and casual jobs.

H The State Free Employment Office is a poor place for a good man to get a job or for an employer to find a capable worker, for the office does not deal with high grade labor. The positions filled are predominantly unskilled.<sup>1</sup> The office is not used by employers and many did not know of its existence at the time of the investigation. Among the reports made by large employers were: "Never use public Agency," "Public bureau not prompt in service," "Don't use public office--worthless."

By far the greater part of the employment work that is carried on is done by the private agencies. They do not, however, meet the needs of the situation, for the individual agencies are small and little use is made of them by employers of skilled labor. The quality of labor which they furnish is not of high grade industrial calibre. Some railroads use them to furnish construction gangs and the lumber camps rely upon them to some extent to furnish lumbermen. Some farm labor is handled and in harvest time the agencies do an increasing business. But, for the purpose of organizing the labor market, private offices are a hindrance rather than a help. From the standpoint of the worker alone, private agencies are "bad" because they charge fees for their services. These fees must be paid by the workers when unemployed and least able to pay for a job; and when unemployment is greatest the fees are highest. In consequence, wage-earners are forced to pay out large sums for services which

<sup>1</sup> For example, from Aug. 1, 1910 to June 30, 1912, the office secured only about 1000 skilled positions out of a total of 50,000. Such jobs as farm hands, handy-men, and laborers make up 60 per cent of whole. See Thirteenth Bien. Report of Minn. Bur. of Labor, pp. 383 ff.

should be publicly dispensed.<sup>1</sup>

In general character, private employment offices do not rank as uplift agencies. They are managed, often by dishonest, unscrupulous agents. Most of them, in Minneapolis, are connected with or located near saloons, pool halls or cheap restaurants, and housed in basements, tenements, low one-roomed buildings in the worst part of the city. They are dirty, disorderly, and crowded; in cold weather the air is indescribably foul. The general reputation of such offices is that they are given to fraud, and this has been proven in many cases. Applicants are sent to any positions which happen to be open, regardless of fitness, and often to places where the employer has made no call for help. Since their success is dependent upon the fees they take, no chance to send men to a job is overlooked. Other dishonest and fraudulent practices abound, but can only be mentioned here. They include: sending applicants to places where no work exists; sending applicants to distant points where there is no work or where the conditions are unsatisfactory; sending applicants to jobs where an agreement has been made with the foreman that the men are to be discharged in a few days to make way for others; inducing workers, particularly girls, to leave their places, pay another fee, and "get a better job"; directing workers to districts that are infected by strikes. Altogether, private agencies contribute to, rather than detract from, the general disorganisation of the labor market.

Summary: Labor still finds its buyer only, as a rule, by being hawked from door to door. All other commodities have a special

<sup>1</sup> It was estimated in Los Angeles that the average fee paid to the private agencies was \$ 2.04, and that, in one year, private agents had taken over one-half million dollars from the working men of the state. See Los Angeles, Third Annual Report, pp. 12-13.

market. As a result, workers out of employment scatter their energies and lose time and money in their search for work. Thousands respond to every "ad" and tramp from place to place in the weary hope that something will turn up. Many factory gates gather armies of "waiters", while some seek in vain for workers. The whole system is absurdly primitive--as primitive as an ox team. There must, on the face of it, be as much reason for abolishing this antiquated and wasteful method of hawking labor as in regard to anything else of such a character. The surprising thing is not that employment bureaus should be wanted now, but that they should not have been established long ago. As the system now works, a man out of work must either spend weary days, perhaps weeks, in what may prove a fruitless search for employment by going from place to place, by answering blind ads in newspapers, or he must go to an employment agency. The present public agency offers a few chances for casual jobs or regular work at common labor. Private agencies charge fees which, if not exorbitant, in times of slack work are prohibitive to a man who can't afford car fare. If he can afford a fee, he is still liable to exploitation at the hands of a dishonest agent, and, even under the best circumstances, seldom gets a permanent job at good wages.

Taken as a whole, private agencies, with their hit and miss style, are an economic loss. Each has a separate over-head expense and all must be supported by the fees of hard-up laborers. The other ways are just as costly. The employer must interview hundreds of men to select ten; the worker loses time and money in his enforced journey from place to place. Clearly there is a vital need for a systematic organization of the labor market, and the task must and should fall upon an efficient, capably managed public employment office, run as a business proposition.

Can the Public Employment Office  
Organise the Labor Market?

Two things should now be clear: first, that mal-adjustments do exist in industry and are responsible for practically all the unemployment prevalent in this country; and, second, that the present organisation of the labor market is wholly inadequate to meet the need. It has been stated that the task of meeting these mal-adjustments and of organising the labor market should fall upon "an efficient, capably managed public employment office, run as a business proposition." The question therefore arises: Can the public employment office prevent or materially reduce the unemployment due to these mal-adjustments? Can it organise the labor market?

Before entering upon this discussion, the obvious limits upon the functioning of the public employment office must be stated. In the first place, a public office cannot make work. If there are no jobs to be had, the employment office is no remedy. Neither can it be of any great service if there is a chronic over-supply of labor. Likewise, if men are idle because they are either unable or unwilling to work, an employment office can accomplish nothing. Again, if unskilled men are idle when skilled men only are wanted, there is no place for an employment office. These most obvious limitations upon the usefulness of the public office are important, for much of the criticisms levelled against it is due to a failure to recognise the limits of its usefulness. It deals with one phase, and only one, of the unemployment problem.

This one phase, however, includes the various types of mal-adjustment which have been named, and the public office can play an important part in eliminating them or lessening their effects.

Even in connection with business cycles and trade depressions, which cause enormous and apparently uncontrollable fluctuations in employment, employment offices have a function. When the public office becomes the centre or source of the labor supply and secured a virtual monopoly of placement, its statistics should show very accurately the volume of employment or unemployment and furnish a valuable trade barometer which would enable the government to shape its labor policy accordingly and take steps to prevent, by artificial means, such as the construction of public works, abnormal unemployment and distress.

The reduction of unemployment resulting from seasonal demands for labor is a much more immediate and difficult task for the public employment office. Success here will depend largely upon securing very definite information as to the demand for labor in each trade at each season and upon securing the cooperation of employers and the public. No one knows whether the demand for labor, even if regular, is of such a nature as to secure a complete dovetailing of occupations. Further, before definite knowledge of the possibilities of transferring labor from one occupation to another can be had, not only must the variations in demand for labor in the various occupations be known, but also the degree to which the skill required in different occupations is similar and can be transferred. Statistics of unemployment in the United States show crests of employment in May and September. The number of persons employed fluctuates regularly. Whether this industrial variation would be offset if non-industrial occupations were included is uncertain. Likewise, there are definite surpluses in the United States and in the industrial states in the number employed in busy years over years of depression. Both the seasonal and cyclical surplus of

labor is reduced, to a certain extent, by variations in immigration and by emigration. Thus, on the whole, there is some doubt as to the extent to which public employment offices could make material reductions in the amount of unemployment due to seasonal demands for labor. That doubt can be dispelled only by an appeal to the figures of placements. But, since the public office does not rest its case for existence wholly upon the extent to which it may prevent seasonal unemployment, this uncertainty is not fatal.<sup>1</sup>

The regularisation of industry is another task closely connected with the two preceding as regards the functioning of the employment office. Heretofore the policy has been to accept fluctuations in employment due to irregularity in business as fixed, and attempt to shift the workers to suit. To a great extent such practices must still be maintained, on account of the uncontrollable factors of changing climate, habit, fashions, and the operation of business for profits, but a more constructive policy would be to seek to modify the fluctuations or irregularities and then shift the workers as necessary. Methods of regularising industry have been devised and used successfully. The employment office can aid in this work, in the first place, by leading public opinion in forcing employers to give attention to the problem, and, in the

<sup>1</sup> The employment office must study carefully ways and means of dovetailing in every locality, and of increasing the inter-local and inter-occupational mobility. For Minneapolis, the Civic and Commerce Association Committee on Unemployment has some data as to busy and slack seasons in the important occupations, which could be used for this purpose. Of 34 large firms investigated, 16 have their busy season from May to September; while 10 have their slack season during practically the same period. Some dovetailing can be done by shunting unemployed labor of all sorts into common or unskilled jobs. For example, during the winter seasons, building trades workers or others who have slack seasons in winter, could take up ice-cutting or logging, or do some of the less skilled work in factories which have a busy season at this time. Through the London Labor Exchanges, women's work in ready-made tailoring, which is busiest in spring and fall, has been dove-tailed with hand-ironing in laundries, which is heaviest during summer.

second place, by organizing the labor resources in such a way as to give steady employment to the largest number possible.

It may be objected to this program that, by increasing the inter-local and inter-occupational mobility of labor, the public employment office defeats its purpose to regularize industry. Industries which are now kept regular by the scarcity of labor might, because of the ease in securing the labor needed at all times, be made irregular. Under the present "rush order" form of business, the tendency for business to become irregular is more pronounced than ever. But employers are finding that it is cheaper, in the long run, to keep a steady working force. Besides, it is possible that the increased facilities for securing employment would enable the most desirable workmen to select the most permanent positions, which, in turn, would make it profitable for employers to maintain greater regularity of employment. Finally, legislation might be used to regulate hours of work, by penalties for over-time, etc., in industries which attempted to take advantage of the possibility for greater irregularity of operation.

For the enormous amount of casual labor which is caused, initially, by irregular and seasonal industry, the public employment office has only one program. That is, the concentration of employment upon the smallest possible number of workers, in order that as many as possible may be given steady employment, or enough to enable them to maintain a high standard of living and working efficiency. This implies, of course, that the employment office shall be a clearing house for casual labor. To accomplish this it will be necessary, in the first place, to have the cooperation of employers and the confidence of the workers. This is not easily brought about, in the face of the fact that, when an employer can

get all the labor he wants at his door, the value of an employment office to him is not clear. For, in such a case, the office appears to be only an agency to redistribute work--to give to B the job that would have gone to A. It must be pointed out to the employer that, under the present system, jobs are distributed over a vast army of under-employed, irregular, and, consequently, inefficient workmen, and that it will be a clear gain, both for his own good and for general social welfare, to replace every one thousand men now working three days a week by five hundred working six days a week. On any view of society--or industry--it is better to have one man well fed and capable than two on perpetual half-rations; better one at a living wage than two at a sweated wage.

The mobilising of the labor reserve is possible to some extent. By utilising the necessary irregularities of business, and by forcing the employment of all workers from the employment office as a common centre, work may be given to a smaller number of men than would otherwise be possible and these would work continuously. The supply of labor drawn into and kept in every occupation tends to be excessive just because it is not fluid enough, just because it does not flow as quickly and as easily as it might wherever it is needed. If it moved more quickly, less of it would cover the same ground. To let three men, for lack of proper mobility of labor, take in succession the jobs that would otherwise all go to one, is to give incentive to three men to remain in a district or occupation in which there is living room for only one of them.<sup>1</sup> It

<sup>1</sup> For example, if all Minneapolis carpenters were registered at an employment office, then so long as any competent local carpenter was unemployed, he would have the first chance of hearing of a local job. As it is, the Minneapolis employer may, by taking on his man at the gates, bring in an outsider and induce him to move into the city at the very time when a perfectly competent local carpenter is unemployed and is slipping into pauperism, for which the local employer, directly or indirectly, will have to pay. Again, at

(continued on next page)

must be borne in mind, however, that decasualisation does not touch the whole of the unemployed problem. It cannot, even where it applies most directly, stand alone. In securing regular employment for some, it must, initially at any rate, drive out others altogether. Provision for these is necessary as a supplement to the problem. On the other hand, neither can other remedies stand alone without decasualisation. They drain a reservoir of the unemployed which fills again automatically. They rescue the individual; they leave the bad system of employment which is the root of the disease. The abolition of that bad system through the instrumentality of the public employment office is the first step needed to make all other steps secure.

With possibly one exception, the remedy for all the other types of mal-adjustment may be classed under the organisation of the labor market--in the narrower sense--by the public employment office. For perfect functioning in this task, the public employment office must come up to seemingly impossible requirements. It should, in the first place, secure information in regard to every position available and every available worker, no position to be filled must fail to be listed. This means that no workers may be hired except through the public employment office.<sup>1</sup> In the second place, it must obtain this information far enough in advance of the demand as to lose no time in filling it at the proper moment.

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the gates, or from the streets, under the present system, the employer very likely gets a man who has been idle and ill-fed for several days; from the employment office he may, under a controlled system, secure a worker who has just left another job. For the reduction of unemployment, employment offices are more needed in those trades which the employer can now "get as many men as he wants when he wants them", than in those in which he sometimes has to wait.

<sup>1</sup> The possibility of this was suggested by Webb, Public Organisation of the Labor Market, pp. 254-5, 265.

This implies that both employers and employes must give advance notice of severing relations. Again, the office must have a monopoly of the employment business; all other agencies must be put out of business or else forced to cooperate closely. In the fourth place, perfect functioning would require a national system of public offices, with full cooperation and exchange of information, and a system of cheap transportation for workers. In the fifth place, it would mean, as has been shown, that the office must increase the inter-occupational mobility of workers, equipping them with two or more trades each. Finally, it would require effective decasualisation of labor and the protection of the labor market from sudden floods of labor by immigration.

Some of these requirements and the methods of meeting them have been discussed. There is much that is difficult in it; there is nothing that is impractical. The desirability of the public organisation of the labor market is clear, and there is a need at all times of an efficient system for bringing employers and employes together as quickly as possible. It seems clear, as Sidney Webb puts it, that the public employment office would<sup>1</sup> "greatly increase the worker's chances of improving his position, greatly lessen the time lost between job and job, greatly diminish the wearing anxiety of looking for work, and greatly facilitate the employer's getting all the labor he can profitably employ. It would not only increase the mobility of labor, but would actually increase the aggregate volume of demand, to the extent of the opportunities for profitable employment that the employer now lets slip because he can't get just what he wants when he wants it."

Through their ability to secure information about jobs and men, public employment offices, organised into a unified system, should be able to direct the current of labor where it is most needed and in that way reduce inter-local maladjustment. Each local

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Devine, op. cit., p. 10.

office should be able to abolish all unemployment that is merely local in character by making it impossible for men to be vainly seeking work in one place while employers are vainly seeking just those men in another. But it can perform the further service of aiding in the proper placing of workers. By its knowledge of the needs of the employer, by its knowledge of the qualifications of the registered unemployed, and by its control, ideally, of the labor supply, it can furnish to the employer much more suitable workers that he could have selected, ordinarily, under the present system.

But there is a hitch in this program of abolishing local and inter-local mal-adjustment by furnishing information to men about jobs. For there are very real difficulties in the way of controlling the mobility of labor. The habit of hawking labor--the aimless wandering of individuals in search of work--would certainly be reduced by information given by the office, but the pressure of unemployment would maintain some of it as long as it was at all profitable,--until the office monopolised the labor market. As for the inter-local mal-adjustment, which undoubtedly exists, the public offices will increase the mobility of labor by spreading information, for the great hindrance to mobility has been the lack of definite, accurate and trustworthy information. But, the known disinclination of workers to leave their homes and families, of city workers to go to smaller towns or to the open country, the fear that the jobs offered are not permanent, etc.,--these things will hinder the adjustment which the employment office seeks to promote and control. In the face of these facts, the actual possible extent of the mobility of labor is questionable.

### Social Aspects of the Problem

It may be accepted then, from the foregoing discussion, that the public organization of the labor market is possible, though the extent to which such an organization might be perfected remains in doubt. The question still remains, however, whether such an organization is socially valuable. By controlled local, inter-local and inter-occupational mobility of labor, among other things, it will be possible for a public employment office to reduce very materially the amount of unemployment, but are these individual 'reforms'--these means to the end--wholly desirable? "An adequate solution of the problem requires not only that unemployment be reduced or eliminated, but also that this solution shall not react on the general social order in such a way as to intensify and complicate other social problems, and produce conditions even more undesirable than unemployment."<sup>1</sup>

In the first place, then, is the greater inter-local mobility desirable? Seemingly it makes of the unemployed mere objects of commerce instead of human beings. The effect on those transported, on their habits and conduct, must be considered. In theory, inter-local mobility aims to give workmen a chance to work, giving them the alternative<sup>ive</sup> of starving at home or getting work away from home. But the practical result may be a type of mobility which is worse than unemployment, in creating a mobile, unattached, footloose existence among workmen. Already, according to an eminent authority, workers are more casual than jobs;<sup>2</sup> already there are thousands

<sup>1</sup> Sutherland, E.H., "Unemployed and Public Employment Agencies, in Mayor's Commission on Unemployment, Report, 1914, Chicago, page 166.

<sup>2</sup> W.M. Leiserson, "The Laborer Who Refuses to Invest," Survey, Nov. 8, 1913, Vol. 31, p. 165.

roaming, drifting incessantly. Inter-local mobility may promote a drift to the cities (it has done so in England) though it is possible that full information as to opportunities might have the opposite effect. Finally, such mobility might promote the spread of temporary engagements for workers. There is no certainty, of course, that any or all of these effects will result; but there is no certainty that they will not result. And the question of whether they will result has not been adequately investigated. The only answer which can be given is that the ill-effects, so far, have not shown themselves to any great extent where public employment offices are in operation. But to this it may be replied that existing offices do not deal, except to an insignificant degree, in the inter-local distribution of labor. As for the fact that casual labor is increasing, the cause may be poor placing of men and the consequent rapid turnover of labor, or it may be the increasing irregularity of industry.

Of greater importance, because of its connection with trade union principles, is the question of the desirability of increasing inter-occupational mobility, an important part of the program of the public employment office. Very clearly, this plan of the employment office is hostile to accepted and jealously guarded principles of trade unionism--in particular that of controlling the labor supply. The public office plans to secure a monopoly of employment and thus, in prospect, destroys the foundation of unionism--the control of personnel and the closed shop. In other words, it would substitute the old system of individual bargaining for the modern system of collective bargaining, the stronghold of organized labor. Under such a system, how can the public office be impartial-neutral in its work? Up to the present, trade unions have been largely

indifferent to the existence and to the policies of public offices, since, for the most part, the offices handled only unskilled, unorganised labor. But there are factors in the present situation--in the newer ideals of the public offices--which will draw hostility and raise another obstacle to the public organisation of the labor market on the basis proposed. The unions will oppose a central supply station for labor as depriving them of their most effective weapon against employers.<sup>1</sup> For they use the placement function and hold out the promise of securing jobs in order to control the labor supply, and they do not want this card trumped. In the public offices union men would be on a par with non-union men.<sup>2</sup> Besides, both employers and employes have advantages to gain by maintaining their own agencies, and both have general principles or policies which will make the successful operation of the public office

<sup>1</sup> The final test of the validity of trade union objections to the work of public employment offices, it would seem, must be the effect on wages. If wages will not be lowered, then the objection is, for the most part void. It is argued that the office, by organising the labor supply, will make it easier for employers to get cheap labor and strike breakers, and that they will try to drive down wages by using the increased competition of the laborers thus brought together. To this argument it may be urged, in the first place, that there is little evidence to support it upto the present. Shrewd employers may sometimes exploit unwary employment office managers and get in orders for help before a warning is sent in by employes, but this is a defect which must be met by labor organisation. As far as wages is concerned, the moral influence of the employment office is to force them up. Office superintendents should frankly tell employers that they cannot get good men at low wages; and few employers will care to advertise the low wages they pay through the employment office. But the natural effect of the functioning of the office should be to raise wages. Instead of increasing competition among laborers it actually decreases it by lessening the number of sources of supply. The worker's enlarged knowledge of available jobs, local and elsewhere, helps him to hold out for higher wages. The continuous stream of new jobs available keeps up his courage and dissipates the mental depression resulting, under the other system, from the fruitless tramping from place to place. The general effect on wages, therefore--by stiffening the worker's demand--is to push them up.

<sup>2</sup> This general trade union objection will hardly apply to Minneapolis which is definitely an open shop town.

difficult. In the face of these facts it becomes apparent, both that there is no immediate prospect of a complete control of the distribution of labor by public employment offices, and that such a control, even if possible, might not wholly be desirable.

This does not mean, however, that public employment offices may not improve the situation greatly, for this is a distinct possibility within the lines laid down by the best of existing offices. But it does mean that there are difficulties in the way of the successful operation of these offices, in accordance with their assigned function, which may prevent any large solution of the problem of unemployment by this means until other factors have changed. For the present all that can be said is that the hostility of trade unions has not developed even in cases where a great deal of skilled labor is placed, and it is to be hoped, by the incorporation of the principle of joint control of employers and organized labor in the management of the employment office, that the danger of union hostility may be avoided.

Summary: Unemployment is a problem of industry. Because of its harmful effects upon the individuals who are unemployed and their dependents through the stoppage of income, the loss of skill and industrial efficiency, the lowering of moral standards; because of the grave social evils, such as pauperism, increased crime, intemperance and vice, and the breeding of discontent and revolt against the social order, which arise from it; and, finally, because it burdens employers with the increased costs of labor turnover, reduced output, and in the difficulty of securing good workers--for these reasons, unemployment has been recognised as a problem of first importance demanding adequate and constructive treatment. It is found that unemployment and labor waste is due almost wholly to

maladjustments in industry: to cyclical and seasonal fluctuations in the demand for labor; to mal-adjustments of the labor supply and demand between communities, between localities, and between industries; to the poor placing of workers and the lack of vocational guidance of juveniles entering the industrial field; and, to the lack of the organisation of the methods of securing help and employment. To prevent or to reduce these maladjustments, it is proposed to establish public employment offices. In performing this function, it was found that the public office could serve the purpose of furnishing statistics of the labor market upon which constructive measures looking to the relief of cyclical unemployment might be based; and that seasonal or other irregularities of industry could be minimized in their effects by dovetailing industries and by the decasualisation of labor, in addition of helpful endeavor in the regularisation of industry itself. It was found, also, that, by controlling the mobility of labor, mal-adjustments of the labor supply could be better adjusted locally, inter-locally, and between industries. The public office can also aid in the proper placing of workers by the use of its opportunities for learning the qualifications of men and the requirements of employers. And it can complete the organisation of the labor market by establishing an effective system for bringing together with as little delay as possible men looking for employment and employers looking for help. In the performance of its function, however, the public office must not <sup>over</sup> look its relation to other social problems and the effect of its operations upon general social welfare. So far only theoretical objections can be offered to the program of the public employment office, but it seems assured that some methods of co-operation between trade unions and employment offices must be worked out before a chief possible obstacle to the success of such offices

may be eradicated.

In conclusion it may be worth while to summarize very briefly the value of public employment offices to the workers, to the employers, and to the general public, in so far as they can be separated and classified in this way.

In general it may be said that the chief value of public employment offices to workers has been in the past and will continue to be that of keeping the public aroused to a serious consideration of the problems of employment and unemployment. By the collection and publication of important statistical material, the public is kept alive to the needs of the situation and the way is paved for beneficial legislation. But, in special concrete ways, the service rendered is more noticeable. This consists chiefly in the reduction of the periods of unemployment between engagements, and in a concatenation of engagements or dovetailing of employment. The effect upon wages has been seen to be beneficial rather than otherwise, by forcing employers to obtain their help from one source. A well organized system, further, should provide a scheme of cheap transportation for workers and thus open up to them a wider field of employment. Trade union secretaries can be aided in their employment work by using the office as a clearing house. Finally, by decasualisation of casual labor, the large amount of under-employment and consequent low standard labor is eliminated and casual employment concentrated upon a smaller number of workers who can thus be brought up to standard in living and working efficiency.

The chief advantage to the employer is in the automatic enlargement of the field of inquiry as to the source of help. Second only to this is its value in securing a high quality of help. The employer is relieved of the time and expense necessary of examining

a large number of applicants who would otherwise besiege his plant, and needs only to choose the best out of a picked group sent to him by the employment office. Also, by a pooling of the labor resources of the community, employers are given the benefit of its entire labor power, subject to their call. Help can be secured quickly and without the inconvenience and expense of advertising or any of the other methods of securing help now in use. The better placing of men made possible should materially reduce the labor turnover, should produce a more efficient and satisfied labor force, and, in these ways, reduce the cost of production. Finally, the employer, by access to information as to the available labor supply both at present and in prospect, will be able to plan his business with more accuracy and with greater success than at present.

As to the value of public employment offices to the general public, only general statements can be made. We need only to picture to ourselves, however, the almost total lack of provision for marketing labor which now exists to see that only upon the institution of efficient systems of public employment offices can the United States as an industrial nation secure accurate knowledge of the labor situation, which is necessarily fundamental to any plan to meet the problem of unemployment in any organized, constructive manner. This same knowledge is necessary in order to discourage injudicious attempts at relief measures. The enormous economic waste, amounting in normal times to 3,000,000 able-bodied men out of work at least three months of the year, can at least be partly stopped by the joint efforts of all the public employment offices. And in so far as unemployment is reduced, just so far are public expenditures for relief and charity, the support of paupers, police, and health officials lessened. As a corollary of this, it should also be found that the reduction of unemployment will tend to

produce a healthier social atmosphere, lessen class antagonisms, and relieve the deep-seated irritations that threaten to break out in revolt against the social order.

But chiefly public employment offices may be of service in acting as nuclei for other important remedies for unemployment, providing the machinery, to so speak, for their successful administration. Thus, employment offices are necessary for proper vocational guidance. They are able, in the first place, to give the information which will make it possible to guide boys and girls into the kinds of work for which they are best fitted and in which the largest possible opportunities for advancement present themselves. They will be able to study and to influence the character of the demand for youthful workers and to accumulate, for the information of the public and the formation of public opinion, or the framing of laws, information as to the careers offered by various trades and occupations. In this same connection, and upon the basis of the same information, the office will be able to guide the school system in its provision for industrial training. In these ways children are protected from blind alleys and placed in positions for which they are fitted by training and disposition. It will tend to keep the children in school longer in order better to fit themselves for work, and will bring the educational system into close connection with the industrial world for which it must fit a large part of its product.

In the next few years unemployment insurance will become common in this country, and if the practice of European countries is followed, it will be administered through the public employment offices. This should be the policy because the records of the employment office will be the nearest approximation to the amount of unemployment in any community, and the office organisation offers

an administrative machinery very suitable for the administration of the insurance fund. As far as is known, the offices furnish the only practicable plan of providing the "work test" which is necessary for the success of any such scheme. Wood yards or rock plies won't do as tests of unemployment; a worker must be offered a bona fide job fitted to his abilities and station in industry before he can rightfully be excluded from employment insurance benefits. Only a well organised system of public employment offices can offer such employment and only through such an organisation of the labor market can it ever be ascertained that there is no opportunity for wage-earners to secure employment. No system of insurance against unemployment--no system of relief, outside of poor laws--is safe from abuse without such a test.

Finally, it may be mentioned that public employment offices are necessary for carrying out relief measures and other social problems dealing with various types of unemployables. They function, in the first place, to separate the employables from the unemployables, and, by proper record systems and the use of the work test, they may force the unemployables out of industry entirely so that they may be treated as a class. Particularly, public offices are needed for any drastic treatment of vagrancy which is so widespread in this country. The excuse of the hobo<sup>is</sup> that he is looking for work. A centralised system of public offices would gradually relieve the habitual vagrant of his excuse and relieve the decent workmen of the necessity of going blindly on the tramp for a job.

These, then, are the services of the public employment office. Within the limitations prescribed by their own organisation and the nature of the problems with which they deal, they should be able

to render signal service in the way of the organisation of the labor market and the reduction of unemployment. Judging from the success of the better offices now in existence, public employment offices are destined to play a very important part in the social machinery of the future. In too many instances, as will be borne out later, employment offices to date have been engines which are working extremely well but have not attached to them the rolling stock of social progress. But it is of the greatest importance to prepare in times of prosperity, such as at present, such engines which can at any moment be attached--as in the case of unemployment insurance in England--to new measures of social reform.

## Chapter Two.

HISTORY AND PRESENT STATUS OF PUBLIC EMPLOY-  
MENT OFFICES IN THE UNITED STATES.

The history of public employment offices in the United States dates from the year 1890 when five offices were established in the state of Ohio, at Cleveland, Cincinnati, Columbus, Toledo, and Dayton. They were followed in 1893 by a municipal bureau in Los Angeles,<sup>1</sup> and one in Tacoma, Washington, the following year. New York city had a free employment office from 1896 to 1906, when the law creating it was repealed. Illinois established six offices in the year 1899.

These early offices came into being out of the desire, primarily, of legislatures to curb the evils of private agencies which were then becoming notorious. It was believed that unemployed workers must be protected from exploitation and that it was the duty of the state to make some provision for them. In some states, also, it was believed that public employment offices would aid materially in supplying much needed farm labor in the agricultural districts.<sup>2</sup> The same motives continued to actuate cities and states in establishing public offices for the next decade. During that time almost two score offices in twelve states were authorized by law and thirty offices were put into operation. In addition, seven municipal offices in as many cities were established. The Massachusetts system, which has been very successful, began in 1901

1. This was transferred from the city to the Associated Charities in 1910. Its failure under such management was a foregone conclusion, and another office, based on correct principles, was established in 1914.

2. See Statistics of Unemployment and the Work of Employment Offices in the United States, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Bulletin No. 109, p. 35. Also, Amer. Labor Leg. Rev., Vol. 4, p. 314.

with three offices -- located at Boston, Springfield, and Fall River. Wisconsin offices, now ranking among the best, were set up in the same year at Milwaukee, La Crosse, Superior, and Oshkosh.

During this period the public offices continued, for the most part, to regard themselves as rivals and competitors of private agencies and had little notion of possibilities for greater usefulness. They lacked efficient management, were poorly financed and politically controlled. In 1907, however, Massachusetts saw a new light, and led the way to success with an intelligent system of office records and efficient business management, especially in the Boston office. A good location was secured, an adequate office force was employed, and records were kept which indicated accurately what had been done. Upon reorganization, the office started off with a rush, employing twenty or more clerks. After the period of depression passed and employment became normal, a superintendent, ten clerks, and three other employes were retained and this number has since been increased.<sup>1</sup> Later on the need of industrial and vocational guidance was conceived and such service was established in 1912. In 1911 Wisconsin followed Massachusetts with a new system of records, based on the Massachusetts practice but adapted to Wisconsin needs, and improved principles of management, especially in regard to the selecting of the office staff. At the same time, an Advisory Committee was appointed, representing employers, labor, and the local governments. Expert supervisory

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1. See the Annual Reports, particularly from the Fifth to the Ninth.

methods were instituted and the entire system put upon a high level of efficiency. In 1914 Ohio, in its Cleveland office, made a long step in advance by introducing real vocational guidance and protection of immigrants. Ohio now has seven offices.<sup>1</sup> In April, 1914, New York passed a law providing for nine employment offices, five of which have been established, with superintendents paid such salaries as to command considerable ability -- \$3000. Co-operation between the offices is provided for under careful supervision from a state director, and a monthly bulletin of the labor market is issued. Advisory committees are also provided.<sup>2</sup>

The success of these offices stimulated a remarkable development in public employment office work. Most state systems now in existence have been established or reorganized in the last six or seven years. Either by state law or by municipal ordinance, public offices have been established in more than half of the states of the Union<sup>3</sup> and are in operation in more than one hundred cities. California, Iowa, Illinois, and Pennsylvania enacted progressive laws during the year 1915 -- in the case of Illinois to amend the law, in the others to establish offices.<sup>4</sup> Federal employment offices have also been established since 1914 and are located in eighteen cities, being operated in connection with the Bureau of Immigration. State-City systems have been established and successfully operated in Cleveland, Milwaukee, and Los Angeles. In Canada

1. Leiserson: op. cit. pp. 707-776

2. See: Proceedings, Amer. Assoc. of P.E.O. Loc. Cit. p. 104.

3. Public offices are now in operation in the following states: Arizona, California, Colorado, Louisiana, Connecticut, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Montana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Texas, Washington, Virginia, West Virginia, Wisconsin.

4. See report of the secretary, Amer. Assn. of P.E.O., July, 1915, Proceedings, loc. cit.

also, the movement is taking hold. Public offices have been established in ten cities in the Provinces of Manitoba, Ontario, and Quebec.

The immediate cause of the rapid extension of employment offices, however, was the widespread distress prevalent in the winters of 1913-14, and 1914-15, due to unemployment. Vast armies of the unemployed congregated in the larger cities and made some sort of constructive measures necessary. The example of foreign countries, particularly England and Germany, in establishing successful national systems of employment offices, stimulated an increased interest in employment offices. England organized her system in 1910, starting with eighty-two exchanges and increasing to 430 in three years. In 1912 more than one million positions were filled, or 77 per cent of all that were notified. Germany put into operation 323 public exchanges, 267 of which in one year filled over a million positions.<sup>1</sup> The whole situation had the effect of arousing employment offices then existing to real efforts to meet the situation and turned their attention to the solution of the problem of unemployment rather than to petty competition with private agencies. The effects of years of mediocrity and inefficiency were not to be lightly cast aside, however, and the majority of public offices are still far below the standard of efficiency that is possible for them to attain.

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1. See an article in Amer. Labor Leg. Rev., Vol. 4, p.355. For further reference on the work of the British Labor Exchanges see Lasker, op.cit. Bul. No.206, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

### Present Conditions in Public Employment Offices.

Although thirty states have established employment offices, less than a dozen states have efficient systems. In some cases only the letter of the law has been obeyed.-- offices have been opened, but do no business. Many offices were not provided with funds by the legislature which brought them into existence; in other cases the laws were merely permissive, and nothing has been done. In many instances the conduct of the employment bureau has been put into the hands either of incompetent officials or those already burdened with other duties. In South Dakota, for example, each register of deeds is supposed to act as an employment agent.<sup>1</sup> Even in those states where public offices are in operation, the majority of them serve only common labor, casuals, and the like.

The chief weakness, however, in the public offices as now organized, is the lack of effective business organization and management. This point will be borne out strongly in later chapters, and it is enough to point out here that, so far, the administration of public offices has been for the most part in the hands of politicians or untrained workers, indifferent to the success of their work and holding office on the basis of political tenure only. As a result there has been no attempt, in most cases, to co-operate with other offices and profit by their successes and failures. Operations have been conducted on a small scale on a thoroughly unbusinesslike basis, and the statistics gathered and published have been unreliable and valueless. Little has been written upon the

proper methods of conducting a public employment office, and the  
 3. For a severe indictment of the work of public employment offices in the United States, see Kellor, op.cit., Chapter X; especially pages 314 ff.

laws under which the offices operate have not been definite as to the way in which the work must be conducted.

The difficulties in the way of the successful operation of public offices -- from outside -- have been numerous. Many offices got a wrong start. In times of depression when unemployment was greater than usual, employment offices were started mainly for relief purposes and quickly became contaminated with the taint of charity. The offices were allowed to become and remain "hang-outs" for sub-standard labor and unemployables, and achieved, thereby, a reputation as unreliable and of no value to employers of labor. This reputation, when established, has been hard to live down and has been as a stone around the neck of offices seeking to escape drowning in the sea of suspicion and lack of confidence which they allowed to form about them. Even where this has not been the condition, offices have had to contend, in the beginning, with the ignorance and indifference of the general public and the suspicion or open hostility of employers and union labor. Add to these obstacles to progress the lack of sufficient appropriations for carrying on the work properly -- which is almost universal -- and the poor location and housing of most offices, and the reasons for their failure to meet conditions become intelligible at least. Besides, the competition of private agencies has not been eliminated or properly regulated except in very few instances. State and municipal laws in this regard are made without any understanding

of the intricate matters involved and without the support of a public sufficiently educated to make the laws enforceable. Such laws as have been passed are far from uniform. Agencies doing an interstate business have gone wholly unregulated, though much of private employment work is of that nature. Finally, the regulation of the private, or fee-agencies, and the establishment of public offices have not gone together, as they must to succeed. Unregulated private agencies put the public offices at a decided disadvantage.<sup>1</sup>

The employment offices established and maintained by the Federal government have not distinguished themselves any more than state and municipal offices in meeting the problem of unemployment and the organization of the labor market. Necessarily they operate at long range, since much of the work is carried on through the mail. Employers are suspicious of a government system, and the fact that the offices are connected with the Immigration Service leads workers to think that they serve only immigrants. No provision is made for co-operation with existing state and city offices or with other agencies for the distribution of labor. The system of registering -- at long range, and without personal interviews in the majority of cases -- makes it impossible to select applicants upon the basis of fitness, which is of first importance. Unregulated private agencies, with organizations capable of taking care of the interstate shipment of workers, have every advantage in competition, for the Federal system makes no provision for cheap

1. Cf. Kellor, op.cit., p. 153.

transportation. The experience of both England and Germany shows clearly that this is essential to the success of any national system.

In general, then, it may be said that, up to the present, public employment offices have not been unqualified successes. Mr. Chas. B. Barnes, Director of the New York Public Employment Offices, puts it more strongly: "Observation of the actual conditions in the majority of the public employment offices now existing shows that they are, on the whole, a distinct failure and are not doing the thing for which they were established".<sup>1</sup> This comment refers only to the situation in the United States, but the condition the world over is not, on the whole, much better. Fruend and Zacher, after a survey of the systems of the world, July, 1913, said:

"The actual position as regards employment bureaus is almost everywhere unsatisfactory. The scattered nature of the organizations and the diversity of methods of administrations make it impossible to obtain a clear general view of the situation on the labor market at a given moment, to determine with certainty the number of workers available and the number of places vacant, to establish a rational equilibrium between demand and supply, to draw up useful statistics of the labor market, and to take preventive measures in time against unemployment".<sup>2</sup>

To these general statements there are some very bright exceptions, however, and the situation is improving rapidly. The public offices have served the useful purpose of forcing a reluctant and unbelieving public to recognize, partially at least, the fact of mal-adjustment in industry and also the principle of public responsibility for such mal-adjustment. The success of some few employment offices has compelled the industrial world to realize that, potentially at any rate, they "stand on the ground floor in this modern cycle of

1. Op. Cit. loc. cit. p.63.

2. Quoted in : Rapport General : Enquete Internationale Sur Le Placement. Bulletin Trimestriel, 1913, p. 664.

industrial unrest and overwhelming unemployment."<sup>1</sup> Among employment offices, themselves, a new spirit has manifested itself and superintendents and state officials are eagerly seeking information about the best and most approved methods of organization and management. In this connection the most significant step in advance was the organization of the American Association of Public Employment Offices in 1913. The purposes of the association, as stated in its constitution, are: (1) to improve the efficiency of the public employment offices now in existence; (2) to work for the establishment of such offices in all states; (3) to secure the cooperation and closer connection between the offices in each state and among the states; (4) to promote uniform methods of doing business in all the public employment offices; (5) to secure a regular exchange of information and reports among the various offices; and (6) to secure a proper distribution of labor throughout the country by the cooperation of municipal, state, and federal governments.<sup>3</sup> As a result of the formation of this association and of the four annual meetings which have been held, the advance in employment office efficiency and success has been rapid and considerable. The standards, methods, and administration of the offices are rising, better quarters are being secured, and, most important of all, competent officials are being put in charge. The growing interest in the subject of employment problems is also shown by the demands made on Congress in the last few years to meet the problem by the establishment of an effective national system of employment offices. In

1. See address by Hilda Mulhauser, Proceedings of Employment Managers Conference, Minneapolis, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Bulletin No. 196, pp. 25 ff.

2. See Proceedings, loc.cit., p.10.

the last session of Congress several bills of that nature were introduced.

Two other movements having to do with the problems of employment and unemployment have an important bearing upon the recent development of public employment offices upon a more efficient basis. The American Association for Labor Legislation and the National Farm Labor Exchange, both organizations of late development, are particularly important in this connection. The former, in 1915, formulated a Practical Program for Labor Legislation which gave first place to the establishment of Public Employment Agencies and formulated the general rules for their operation as they have been worked out so far by American and European experience. The other parts of that program -- systematic distribution of public work, regularization of industry, and unemployment insurance -- are hinged upon this first step and made to depend largely upon the success of the employment offices.<sup>1</sup> The National Farm Labor Exchange has for its purpose actual employment work, in the handling and distribution of men during the grain harvest of the middle west. Its membership is composed of representatives of the United States Department of Labor, the United States Department of Agriculture, the Labor Department of each state concerned, and of various civic and commercial associations.<sup>2</sup>

With an awakening public consciousness in regard to the problem of unemployment and the work of employment offices, with the reor-

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1. See the American Labor Legislation Review, June, 1915,

2. See description of the organization in Proceedings, Am. Asso'n of Public Employment Offices. pp.117-118.

ganization of the offices along the lines of business efficiency and capable management, with national organizations growing whose activities aid greatly in promoting the establishment and development of successful employment offices, there is every reason to hope that the next decade will see the movement for the organization of the labor market and the prevention of unemployment grow by leaps and bounds. The work of conducting employment offices should become standardized and be recognized as a profession worthy of the consideration of well trained men who wish to enter an important branch of the public service. Already there are signs that this ideal is being approached. The best offices are widening their scope, employing competent help and paying salaries that compare favorably with the average business undertaking. The class of workers that is served is steadily improving until now over sixty per cent of the applicants in some offices are skilled or semi-skilled workers, not counting an increasing number of professional and other highly trained persons. The commercial divisions of some offices are securing positions paying in some instances \$250 per month and \$2500 per year. With the development of uniform methods and standards and organized co-operation among all public offices, their possibilities for usefulness should increase many fold and they should become indispensable institutions in the industrial world.

It is with the hope of contributing something to the movement for putting all public offices upon such high planes of efficiency thru standardization and the adoption of uniform methods, that the following chapters have been written.

## Chapter Three

## ORGANIZATION OF THE PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT OFFICE

## Public Designation.

The experience of various public employment offices in the United States has proved that the name used by a public employment agency, in the sign over the door at its place of business, and in its advertisements before the unemployed, the employer, and the general public, should not be selected without serious consideration of the impressions it will make. It must be borne in mind that the name used should suggest and signify the proper function of the employment office. It must also be such as will attract public attention and make for public confidence. Finally, the name must not suggest charity or philanthropy, must not put it into the class of the ordinary private labor agency, but should, however, indicate its public or non-fee character.

There are a number of names which might be used for an employment office in Minneapolis which would more or less fit the requirements of (1) designating the location of the office and the scope of its operations, (2) indicating its character -- whether public, private, or charitable --, and (3) its function or purpose. Of the two words to designate location and scope, "Minnesota" and "Minneapolis", the latter should be chosen. This is in accord with the practice in most other cities, and is in harmony with the chief purpose of an employment office in concentrating upon the problem

of organizing the local labor market. The use of "Minneapolis" in the title would tend to secure local interest and support, though it might make more difficult the task of securing state appropriations and might cause the organization of the state labor market to be neglected. This latter objection, however, for reasons that will appear later, is not a serious one. The chief reason for the use of "Minneapolis" instead of "Minnesota", however, is that the latter word is now in use in connection with the existing state agencies. As long as these agencies continue, the use of the name "Minnesota" is impossible; but even if they are supplanted by the offices proposed in this discussion, the taking over of their title would damn the new offices from the beginning. State names are in use, however, in connection with the employment offices in Massachusetts, Illinois, Indiana, and New York.

Other names to indicate location and scope might be considered, but may be passed over for the more important question of how to designate properly the character of the employment office. In the early days of employment offices in this country, the word "free" was most commonly used in order to gain an advantage over the too numerous private agencies against which the public offices directed their efforts. It is still in use in Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin, and until just recently in Massachusetts, in connection with all the state offices. Numerous municipal bureaus, as Los Angeles and Tacoma, also used the word. Certainly "free" leaves no doubt about

1. Such, for example, as "City-State" used in Cleveland. This indicates joint support and state-wide scope, but it is inelegant and clumsy and the address of the office -- i.e., the word "Cleveland" -- must still be used to show location.

the cost of the service to employer or employee, but it does cast a suspicion of charity on the system and has a tendency to keep away from the office the most desirable patrons. The term has been outgrown in the United States and is no longer used in connection with the public schools, libraries, parks, and other free institutions. The law establishing employment offices should, of course, declare the services free, and the fact may be stated in public advertisements of the work of the office, but the word should not appear in the title.<sup>1</sup> The correctness of this principle is attested by the experience of Massachusetts and New York offices which have eliminated "free" from the public designations of their offices after having used it for years. Other offices will soon follow their example. As a substitute the word "public" indicates the ideal of community service, the absence of partial or political control, and suggests public responsibility for its success. As intimated, the word is coming rapidly into use in connection with employment offices, being used, notably, in New York and Wisconsin, the two most efficient state systems in the United States.

To designate the function of the public office, various phrases are possible, such as "labor exchange", "labor agency", "employment bureau", "employment agency", and "employment office". The first is widely used in England and Germany and suggests the market-place and clearing house functions that should be characteristic features. However, the words are so commonly used in this

1. Cf. C. B. Barnes, "Conditions and Management of Public Employment offices in the United States". U.S. Bureau of Labor, Bulletin, No. 193, p.73 ff.

country in connection with private agencies handling unskilled labor that their use is hardly desirable. The same is true of "labor agency". The word "Bureau" has been widely used in connection with employment offices, since it is so largely used in governmental activities of all kinds. For this reason, however, it is objectionable. It has been so far over-worked that it has lost any specific connotation it may once have had, and, in addition, has fallen into disrepute through connection with grafting political groups.<sup>1</sup> Of all the phrases noted, "employment office" is undoubtedly the best and is being recognized as such over the United States. Aside from being distinctive and differentiating the public agency from private and charitable systems, the phrase suggests the business-like management and business character of the work to be carried on, and indicates the function of the office -- that of securing employment for men and men for employment. The phrase is used in the State systems of New York, Illinois, and Massachusetts.

In view of the foregoing discussion, the names for the Minneapolis agency should probably be: "The Minneapolis Public Employment Office."<sup>2</sup>

1. Cf. Lasker, *British System of Labor Exchange*, loc.cit. p.109.

2. Among the public designations used in other states and cities are the following:

- Massachusetts State Public Employment Offices.
- City-State Free Labor Exchange (Cleveland)
- Milwaukee Free Employment Bureau. (The Supt. uses word "public")
- New York Public Employment Offices.
- Los Angeles Free Employment Agency.
- Indiana Free Employment Bureau,
- Public Free Employment Bureau. (Louisville, Ky.)
- Federal-City Free Employment Bureau.

### Location and Arrangement of Office.

In the location and arrangement of a public employment office, there are some general principles which must be adhered to if the work of the office is to be a success. In the first place, the office should be located conveniently to the business district, easily accessible to both employers and employees. If there is an unskilled labor branch office, it should be located near the centre of the district where such labor is most used. This practice is followed in Los Angeles, for example, where three branches are maintained, each nearest the centre where it is most convenient for employers. Chicago maintains an unskilled labor department in the industrial district of the city, though the central office also handles some unskilled labor.

The failure of many public employment offices in the past to secure proper location has been an important factor in their lack of success in securing patronage and serving the unemployed. As a rule the locations are not prominent and they do not attract public attention. The offices should be housed in good buildings, on the ground floor, well lighted and ventilated. Instead, most of them occupy cramped quarters, many of them in the basements of public buildings or on the second floor, and lighting and ventilation are, in some cases, almost unbelievably bad.<sup>1</sup> The Boston office, one of the most efficient in the country, is located in a poor quarter

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1. Cf. Keller, Francis, "Out of Work"; Chapter V.  
Also, Bulletin, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, No. 192, pp. 67-8.

of the city; the Minneapolis office occupies two unsightly rooms in the basement of the court house. Other offices for the most part fare no better. In New York state, however, all the offices, with the exception of Syracuse, are on the ground floor in good buildings near the business district. The Chicago offices, too, are fairly well located. For some purposes, the second floor may be used for employment office work. Divisions for clerical and professional help may, if necessary, be located there and it has not been entirely unsuccessful to have the woman's department cared for in this way<sup>1</sup>

The character of the surroundings of the public employment office must be considered also. The office should not be immediately adjacent to pool-rooms, saloons, or other loafing places of questionable character. The reasons for this are too obvious to need justification. Finally, because a public employment office is likely to be limited in resources, the question of rent must be considered for only a moderate sum can be afforded. In some cities this problem is solved by securing a building free, the rent to be paid by the city. Some such scheme as this should be possible for Minneapolis.<sup>2</sup>

#### Location of the Minneapolis Office.

Of the possible locations for a Minneapolis office, the Court House, at least, is out of the question. It is not centrally

1. See Annual Report of the Illinois Free Employment Offices, 1915.
2. For rent paid in other cities, see the budgets presented later in the section on "Support of the Public Employment Office".

enough located and its use for employment office purposes of the type proposed is obviated by the fact that the existing state office is located there. A new system should be removed from any suspicion of connection with the old. With one exception the securing of a central location is denied by the high rent charges to be met with, even if the city should assume this expense. This exception is the federal building formerly used as the Post Office and now partly in use as a recruiting station. This building, located on the corner of Third Street and Marquette Avenue, is centrally located and offers ample space on the first floor for all the work of the employment office in all departments. Officers of the Civic and Commerce Association are of the opinion, after some investigation, that the building can be secured rent-free from the government and remodelled to suit employment office purposes. It may be, however, that this would necessitate giving the federal government part control over the office. The results of this joint control are only conjecturable, though the scheme seems to be working well in Tacoma, Washington.

#### The Arrangement of the Office.

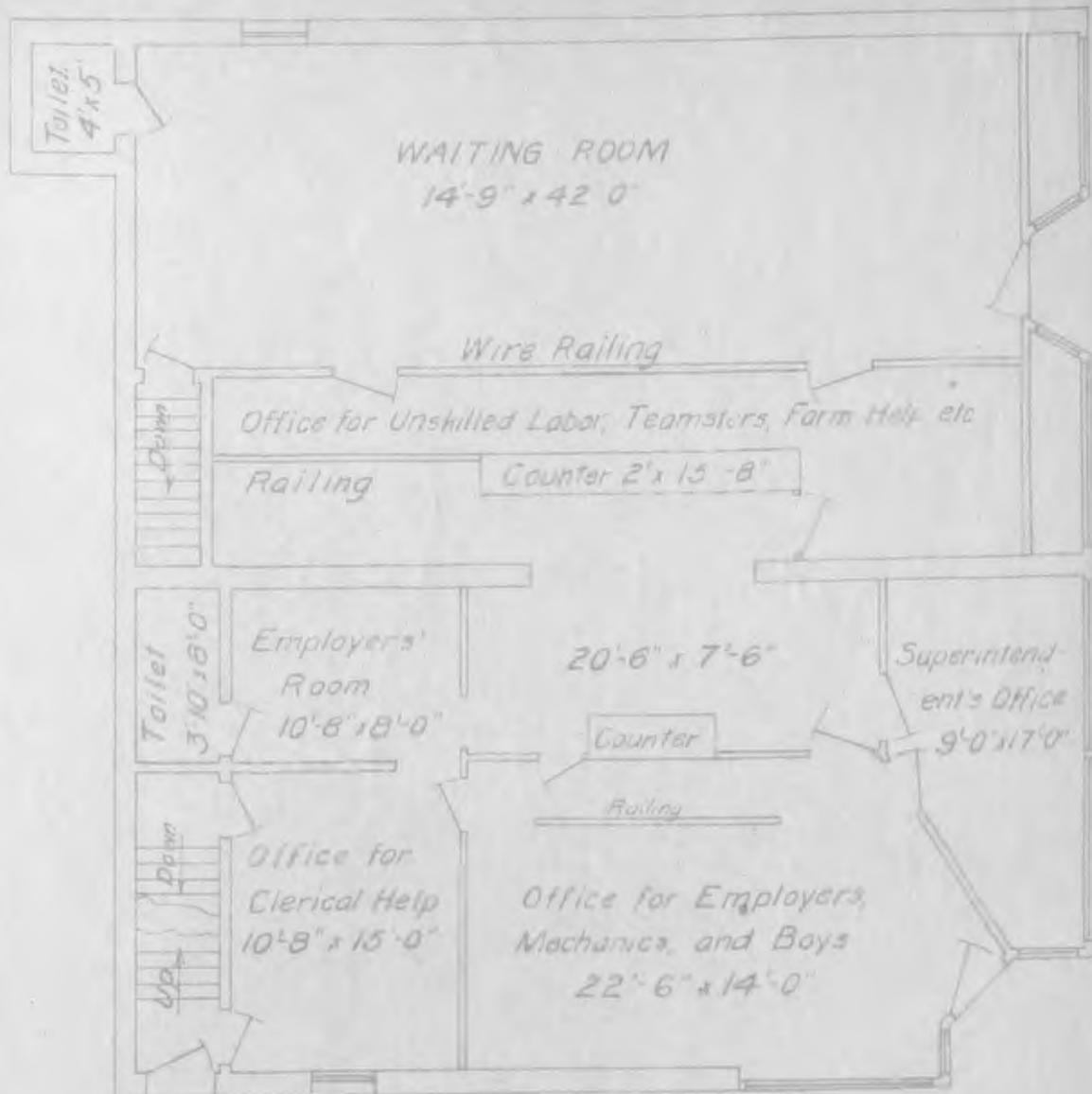
From the experience of public offices over the United States certain general principles as to office arrangement may be formulated. In the first place, the office should open on the street and there should be separate entrances for men and women, on different streets, if possible. If there are further divisions, such as skilled and unskilled, or juvenile, separate entrances for each group should be

provided as far as possible. This the English practice and it has proved highly desirable.<sup>1</sup> In New York State, all the offices have separate entrances for men and women, and the same is true of the offices in Massachusetts, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Ohio, though they do not all open on the street. In the second place, the offices should be divided, wherever space and clerical force permit, into divisions on the basis of skill and each department should be segregated or railed off from the others. In some of the larger offices, as the municipal bureau in New York City, further division is attempted -- along occupational lines -- with a separate department for each. Divisions in other offices in the United States will be discussed later. In the third place, applicants in all divisions must be railed off entirely from the office staff. There is some difference of opinion whether the office force should be centred, with the waiting rooms for applicants ranged around, or whether the waiting rooms should be centred and the office force occupy the sides and ends of the building. Both plans are in use and seem to be working successfully, so experience can not be appealed to as a basis for judgment. From the viewpoint of office routine and convenience, however, it would seem that the former plan should be the better. Outline plans of the office arrangement of the employment offices in Chicago, Milwaukee, and Boston, illustrating both arrangements, are appended to this section as these are among the more successful offices in existence.

No standard equipment for a public employment office has been

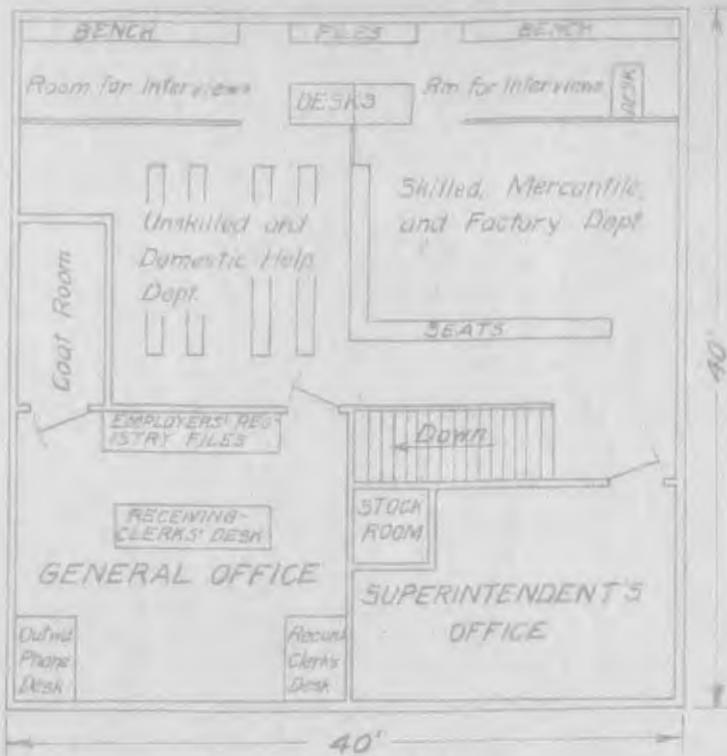
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1. See Lasker: The British System of Labor Exchanges, U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Bulletin No. 306, Oct., 1916.



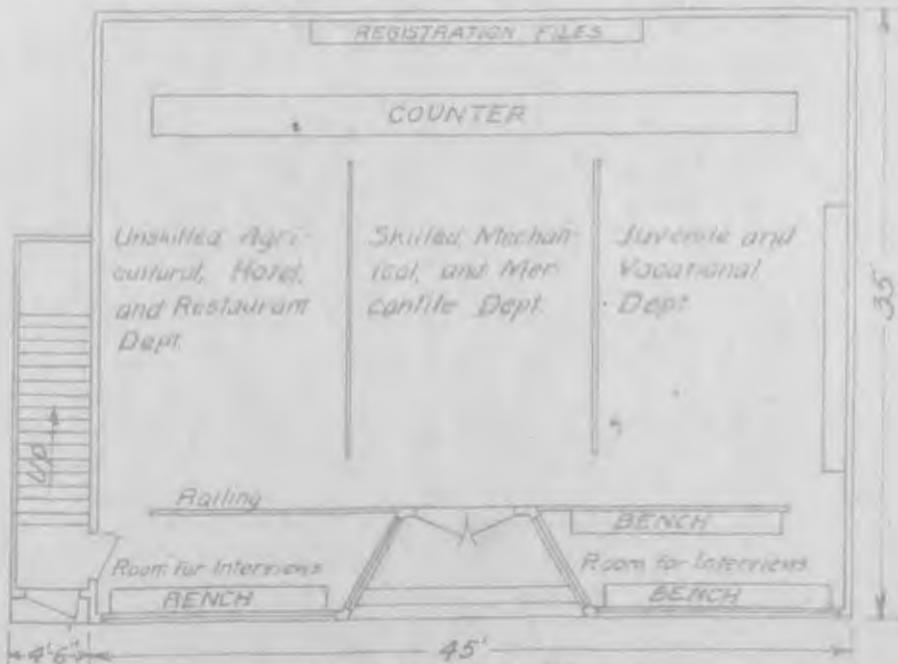
FLOOR PLAN

PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT BUREAU  
 MILWAUKEE, WIS.  
 Scale  $\frac{1}{8}'' = 1'-0''$



SECOND FLOOR

Female Departments and Office



GROUND FLOOR

Male Departments

PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT OFFICE

BOSTON, MASS.

Scale:  $\frac{3}{32}$ " = 1'-0"

worked out and it is, perhaps, unnecessary, since this depends so much upon the business of the individual office, and upon the funds available. There should, however, be a private telephone exchange, an interview desk for each placement secretary, and filing cabinets of such a nature and in such numbers as to permit the keeping of an accurate and complete system of records.

#### Organization of the Employment Office -- Support.

The principle of joint support should be tried out by the Minneapolis Public Employment Office. This means that the funds for the operation and maintenance of the office should be subscribed partly by the State of Minnesota and partly by the city of Minneapolis. Federal support is also to be encouraged to a certain degree. As indicated in the previous section, the government should be asked to provide the necessary office space rent-free and equipped for employment office purposes. It is to be hoped, also, that in the near future the franking privilege will be extended to all public employment offices by the federal government. Finally, if the government wishes to consolidate its immigration and farm labor placement work with the local office, it should provide adequate and competent help, subject to the general rules of the office as laid down by the local superintendent.

The burden of the support, however, should be divided between the city and the state. The employment office will serve both the city and the state, though its service to the former will perhaps

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be greater than to the latter. Since the welfare of the two are inseparably bound together, the question of which should bear the burden of the cost should not enter except upon the basis of expediency. The principle of joint support makes the large resources of the state available and secures local interest, confidence, and co-operation which are necessary for success. In practice, the office will operate primarily to serve the interests of Minneapolis but this does not mean that it will not, at the same time, be serving the state as well. In fact, it can best serve the state by serving Minneapolis as efficiently as possible. The principle of joint support is not a new one, for it is at the foundation of the public school system and many other public institutions, especially those for the care of tubercular people and other defectives.

The support of the Minneapolis office should take the form of the assumption by the city of all local expenses, including rent charges, if this is not donated by the national government, light heat, and janitor service. This plan is followed successfully in Cleveland and Milwaukee and is being tried out in various places in the state of New York. The Director of the New York system of employment offices, Mr. Chas. B. Barnes, says concerning this practice: "The paying for even a small part of the office's expenses will cause the city to feel a proprietary interest in it which will lead to a more careful noting of the workings of the office and its upbuilding".<sup>1</sup> In addition, Minneapolis should pay

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1. Annual Report of Industrial Commission, State of New York, Department of Labor, Part VI, p.366.

the salary of the juvenile placement secretary and all of the expenses of the juvenile branch of the employment office. This work is now being done to some extent by the Department of Attendance and Vocational Guidance of the public school system and is being paid for by the city through the Board of Education. Since it is a service exclusively to the children of Minneapolis and their parents, and since it is desirable to retain in large part the present organization and control, it is very necessary that the support for this branch of the work should come from the city.<sup>1</sup>

Support from the State should include the salaries of all members of the office staff, including the Superintendent, who have not been provided for otherwise, and the expenses of equipment and maintenance. This latter includes such items as printing, advertising, record forms, and stationery, and the office furniture and equipment. The cost of solicitation, in whatever form it takes,<sup>2</sup> and transportation advances to working men, if they are made, should both be charged up to the State. It is to be hoped, of course, that the amounts appropriated for the support of the public employment office will not be definitely prescribed or limited, unless upon the basis of an annual budget submitted to the legislature by the Superintendent of the office. The English practice of passing a "blanket" appropriation for "any expenses incurred", leaving to

1. The details of the organization of the Juvenile Branch and its connection to the employment office will be presented later.
2. In Los Angeles, for example, the State of California furnishes two field agents with Ford cars to do solicitation work outside of the city. The Superintendent of the Minneapolis office, in order to do efficient work in securing the patronage of employers, should be provided with an automobile by the State. Such matters may well be left, however, until the office organization has been perfected and it is ready to enlarge its activities.

the judgment of the Board of Trade the decision as to necessary expenditures, should be followed in this country by giving to the State Departments of Labor, to State Industrial Commissions, or to responsible advisory boards of public employment offices the power to authorize expenditures for carrying on the work, using their own discretion as to the amounts or bound by law only within generous limits.

Estimated Budget for First Year.

To be borne by the city:

Lighting -----	\$ 150.	
Heating -----	500.	
Janitor's services and supplies, -----	<u>1,000.</u>	
Total by city -----		\$1,650. <sup>1</sup>

To be borne by the State:

Advertising and printing. -----	\$1,100.	
Postage, Stationery and Supplies -----	450.	
Telephone and Telegraph -----	250.	
Travelling expenses -----	50.	
Miscellaneous expenses -----	100.	
Salaries -----	9,380.	
Furniture and equipment -----	<u>950.</u>	
Total by State -----		\$12,260.
Grand Total -----		<u>\$13,910.</u>

Few public employment offices publish reports of classified expenditures. Two or three tables are given below, however, for purposes of comparison with the budget proposed for Minneapolis.

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1. If rent is not secured free from the federal government, \$1500 to \$2000 should be added to the total for the city.

Classified Expenditures of Chicago, Peoria, East St. Louis,  
and Springfield, Illinois.<sup>1</sup>

Maintenance of office	Chicago North Side	Chicago South Side	Chicago West Side	Peoria	East St. Louis	Springfield
Salaries. . . . .	\$6,300.00	6,920.00	6,200.00	4,780.00	5,020.00	5,020.00
Rent . . . . .	1,200.00	1,357.00	900.00	900.00	1,200.00	600.00
Postage and Express . . . . .	29.18	.....	32.85	64.17	18.85	5.00
Telephone and Telegraph . . . . .	173.69	260.95	248.96	127.05	154.80	96.35
Gas and Electric Light . . . . .	33.42	84.80	123.64	13.12	24.80	20.32
Office Supplies . . . . .	32.21	101.46	56.50	14.00	31.60	.....
Miscellaneous . . . . .	221.25	247.45	381.50	47.73	131.36	109.81
	\$7,889.75	9,062.45	7,943.45	5,946.07	6,581.41	5,851.48

Classified Expenditures for the Maintenance of Employment  
offices in the State of Massachusetts -- 1915.<sup>2</sup>

	Boston	Springfield	Worcester	Fall River	Total
Printing Report . . . \$.	47.18	23.59	23.59	23.59	117.95
Job Printing . . . . .	234.13	159.39	135.27	34.39	563.18
Postage . . . . .	220.10	138.25	195.45	46.00	599.80
Sta. and Supplies . . . . .	37.99	42.38	33.05	1.30	114.72
Machine supplies . . . . .	58.78	57.30	8.25	3.00	125.33
Rent . . . . .	4,200.00	1,020.00	1,200.00	600.00	7,020.00
Lighting . . . . .	205.05	30.79	30.01	33.10	298.95
Tel. and Teleg. . . . .	561.17	206.22	108.83	75.49	951.71
Advertising . . . . .	207.91	151.10	144.09	25.14	528.24
Cleaning Mater. . . . .	78.00	19.98	58.71	6.30	162.99
Expressage . . . . .	5.00	2.11	3.71	3.35	14.17
Travel . . . . .	--	--	.70	.60	1.30
All other . . . . .	46.75	8.31	19.53	49.05	123.64
Salaries (inc. Jan. services)	13,177.15	6,557.86	5,689.69	2,095.74	33,420.51

1. This the Illinois report for 1914. The Chicago offices were re-organized in 1915 and do not report expenses for the entire year. The 1916 report has not yet been issued. The total expenses of the Chicago offices for the year, however, according to advices from the General Supt., were \$41,234.90 as compared with something less than the \$25,000 shown in the above report.
2. See the Ninth Annual Report on the State Free Employment Offices. The total expenses of the Boston office for 1916, according to personal report of the Director of the Bureau of Statistics, was \$20,702.31.

Expenses of the Los Angeles Free Employment Agency  
July, 1, 1915, to July 1, 1916.<sup>1</sup>

Salaries . . . . .	\$ 10,983.71
Communication Service . . . . .	1,060.34
Advertising . . . . .	1,222.21
Transportation . . . . .	134.89
Alterations and Repairs . . . . .	794.50
Typewriter repairs . . . . .	5.50
Drayage . . . . .	3.00
Electricity . . . . .	107.25
Printing and Reports . . . . .	107.25
Rents . . . . .	1,987.80
Stationery and Office Supplies . . . . .	763.39
Janitor Supplies . . . . .	60.59
Fuel Gas . . . . .	11.89
Miscellaneous . . . . .	5.50
Total Cash Expenditure . . . . .	<u>\$ 17,142.23</u>
Depreciation on furniture, etc.,	<u>108.25</u>
Gross Expense for the Year . . . . .	17,250.51
Deductions -- Inventory of Supplies . . . . .	<u>536.41</u>
Net Cost to the City . . . . .	16,714.10
net Cost paid by the State . . . . .	<u>1,999.54</u>
Total cost of operating bureau . . . . .	<b>\$ 18,713.64</b>

Expenditures of Employment Offices of the  
State of New York.<sup>2</sup>

Salaries ( 5 offices ) . . . . .	\$ 27,778.50
Furniture and equipment ( 6 offices ) . . . . .	5,019.18
Rentals . . . . .	5,162.00
Advertising, printing, travelling, expenses, expressage, stationery. . . . .	<u>3,693.55</u>
Total Expense . . . . .	<b>\$ 41,653.23</b>

1. See Third Annual Report, 1915. The auditor's report charges all gross expenditures to the Bureau and allows nothing for the inventory, except in case of outlay (i.e., office equipment, such as furniture). Most of the electricity and fuel costs are included in rents, so do not show actual amounts. The State bears the expense and takes the credit for placements outside the city.
2. This covers the period from the time the Director was appointed November, 1914, to October 1st, 1915. The first office was established January 4, 1915, and the last -- the 5th -- on April 23, of the same year. The expenses from October 1, 1915, to July 1, 1916, according to the Director, were approximately \$41,000.00.

### Appropriations

Most employment offices in the United States belong to state systems and therefore depend for support almost entirely upon appropriations from the legislatures of their respective states. It is of the first importance that these appropriations be adequate to the needs of the offices, allowing for a sufficient office force to conduct the work and the payment of salaries high enough to secure efficient employes. The adequacy of the appropriation is a real criterion of the usefulness of a public employment office and in most cases there is a direct ratio between the two. The best offices in the country, it is true, suffer from lack of funds to carry out their work in the largest possible way but some few, notably those whose budgets were reproduced, above, have fared well in comparison with most of the remaining offices. Wisconsin offices are a notable exception. It is the concensus of opinion among those who have investigated public employment offices at first hand that the chief cause for the failure of many of them has been the lack of adequate appropriations. It seems that legislators, most of them being from rural districts, do not appreciate the value of employment agencies, or else believe them to be valuable to cities only. When convinced of the need, they are inclined to think that the only expenses of such offices should be meagre salaries for the superintendent and his office help. In 1914, only seven states made adequate appropriations: New York, Illinois, Massachusetts, Ohio, Wisconsin, Colorado, and Indiana. Minnesota

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got a lump sum of \$10,000 for a period of two years from the general appropriation made for the Department of Labor.<sup>1</sup>

#### Control of the Public Employment Office.

Obviously there must be some ultimate control or final authority for the government of the public employment office. There seems to be no set practice, however, among the states or cities of the United States as to what individual or group of individuals should exercise that control. The offices in Wisconsin and Ohio, among others, are under the general supervision and direction of their respective State Industrial Commissions. These commissions outline the broad general policies for the offices to follow, prepare record forms to be used, prescribe the reports to be made, facilitate the exchange of reports and information between the

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1. The largest appropriation by any state, so far, was by the New York legislature - a Supply Bill of 1914 and Appropriation, 1915 -- totalling \$62,631.66. The State appropriations are only for salaries; the other expenses are paid out of a general fund by the Industrial Commission.

The second largest appropriation was by Illinois in 1915, with a total of \$59,312.11 for eight offices. Two-thirds of this amount went to the Chicago offices. The work done in the Illinois offices, however, is not the best, because of politics.

Boston and the other Massachusetts offices are fairly well provided for, as the budget showed. The appropriation for the Boston office, for the fiscal year ending Nov. 30, 1916, was \$20,702.31.

The Milwaukee, Wis., office is able to do very excellent work on its appropriation which, for its last fiscal year, was \$8,120.62. The staff is small and the office has not such a large field as Boston or Chicago, but it serves its city well and handles a great deal of farm labor. Indeed, it has sometimes taken business away from the Chicago offices.

Ohio, in 1914, appropriated \$16,200 for salaries only. The total expenses of five offices, including rentals, etc., paid by the cities, amounted to over \$25,000. Colorado appropriated \$11,300 for four offices; Connecticut, \$10,000 for five offices. With the possible exception of Michigan, none of the other state offices receives enough appropriation to meet even the minimum requirements of employment office work.

offices, and are always consulted -- have final authority -- as to changes that are made. Further, they appoint all members of the office staffs from regularly established civil service eligibility lists, and pay all salaries. In New York a somewhat similar plan is followed except that the general supervision of the Bureau of Employment is put into the hands of a single member of the state Industrial Commission who gives some attention to the work. This Commissioner appoints an Advisory Board for each local office and co-operates with the Director, who is chosen by competitive examination under a special dispensation. This director has general and immediate supervisory and administrative power over all the local offices. The local superintendents are given generous liberties, however, for experimentation in seeking to improve the work of their offices. The Advisory Boards give advice only; the real authority is in the hands of the Director. Wisconsin and Ohio also have State Superintendents with large powers; Milwaukee, Wis.<sup>1</sup> has local Advisory Board with supervisory powers, but it is purely a co-operative affair, locally appointed, and not authorized by law.

In Massachusetts the Director of the Bureau of Labor Statistics exercises some supervision over the local offices,<sup>2</sup> especially in financial matters, and attempts to keep the practices of the various offices uniform by prescribing the forms of reports, but there is no direct or immediate supervision and control. The same

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1. Cleveland has an Advisory Board for its woman's and girl's bureau and is hoping to have one appointed for the entire office.

2. The director is asking the legislature to allow him to appoint advisory boards.

is true of the Indiana system, though it seems to have been more affected by politics than the Massachusetts system. In Chicago and the other Illinois offices, the control is directly political, with the exception of the recently appointed non-partisan state and local advisory boards. These are appointed, however, by the Governor of the State. These boards, especially the general state board, have large powers in using the local offices in organizing the labor market of the state. The Secretary of the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the General Superintendent in Chicago are supposed to co-operate. This system has only recently been instituted, and it may be early to discuss its merits, but it surely lacks, on the face of it, any centralized administrative control which will insure its success.

The control of the Minneapolis Public Employment office as respects general policies and administration should be vested finally in the local advisory board. Its powers and duties may be prescribed by state law or by the authority establishing the local office, such as the Department of Labor.<sup>1</sup> The practical and detailed administration of the office should be in the hands of the superintendent, who shall have large powers and a free hand in carrying out the general policies of the office and the directions of the law or other body of prescribed regulations. The office should, however, have definite relations with the State Department of Labor. Unless, or until, some form of state organization is instituted, the local superintendent should co-operate with the

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1. The state legislature in the session just adjourned passed a law permitting the Commissioner of Labor to establish, in co-operation with municipalities, such employment offices as he deems advisable.

Commissioner of Labor in adopting a system of records and reports which will furnish valuable statistics needed by the State Department. If other offices are established, the Commissioner of Labor should prescribe the methods of co-operation between them and enforce uniformity, or appoint a State Superintendent.

#### Composition of the Advisory Board.

Because a public employment office is established primarily to serve employers and employes, its control should rest largely in their hands, and they should be given equal representation on the advisory board. In order to establish a balance of power and for the further purpose of giving the general public a chance to look after its interests, a member representing neither employers nor employes should be chosen. A board composed of seven members, three of employers and employes, and one member representing the general public, should prove desirable for the Minneapolis office, being small enough to secure efficiency and large enough to prove truly representative. This line-up will make certain the impartiality of the board on all labor matters and should secure the confidence of those classes upon whose patronage the success of the office will depend.

The principle of joint control as here advocated is not new in public employment office administration. In One form or another it exists in connection with public offices in Milwaukee, in all the

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state offices in Illinois, and the five offices of the state of New York. In Milwaukee the Advisory Committee evolved from the mayor's committee to study unemployment and has retained the form of that committee. Organized labor is represented by five members chosen from the Federated Trades Council. The Merchants and Manufacturers Association, the Common Council of Milwaukee, and the County Board of Supervisors are represented each by a like number. The Committee members cast individual votes, which excludes employers and employes from exercising final control, but since the Committee has only general advisory powers and is used chiefly for securing public support, the composition of the Committee has no significance. In Illinois the Advisory committees, both general and local, are composed of five members only -- two representing employers, two representing employes, and one representing the general public. They lack, however, as in the case of the Milwaukee board, any real powers and their prescribed duties are so general and indefinite that it is doubtful that they will render any real service.<sup>1</sup> In New York the Advisory Boards observe the principle of equal representation, with a neutral chairman selected by the rest of the board. The number of representatives is not limited, however, and can be fixed to suit each local situation. The personnel of the first board to be appointed under the law includes some of the most able and interested men of the state and the employment offices should be well served by them. The first annual report of the

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<sup>1</sup>See provisions of the Illinois law as amended June, 1915. Seventeenth Annual Report of the Illinois Free Employment Offices, for the year ending September 30, 1915.

Director since the new system went into operation indicates that the advisory boards have been of real service.<sup>3</sup>

#### The Necessity of Joint Control.

As has been indicated, equal representation on the Advisory Board of both employers and employes, and the possession of real power by the Board, are necessary in order to secure impartiality in the administration of the office, and to secure public confidence and interest in its work. Where the plan has been used the results have been excellent, for it secures a better class of patrons than is usual for public offices, and aids in securing adequate appropriations. This type of control is necessary, also, to insure concentration upon the chief problem of every employment office; placing workers in proper employment and supplying employers with efficient and suitable workers. The most important reason, however, is to be found in the necessity for absolute impartiality of management, particularly in connection with labor disputes, and for keeping in touch with and amenable to the attitude of employers and employes. In many cities having public offices, employers do not even know of the existence of the office and rarely regard it as a place to secure help. Some employers use the public office only in case of extreme necessity and the service has not always been satisfactory, so they have no further use for it. Others misunderstand the function of the office and expect to have a man sent to them who is ready to be put to work without examination, even though

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1. Advisory Boards have been an important part of the English system of labor exchanges since the organization of the national system in 1909. They are used chiefly, however, in connection with the juvenile branches of the offices and their composition will be deferred until the subject of juvenile placement is taken up.

in many cases they had not explained to the office the exact requirements or given the office a chance to visit their establishments in order to learn their needs. Still other employers have the idea that the public offices are controlled by Socialists or by Trade Unionists and they are frankly suspicious of its work. It is very clear that an employment office can hardly hope to succeed in organizing the labor market when employers -- the majority of them -- are ignorant of, indifferent to, or suspicious of, the work of the office. It will be the business of the Advisory Board to remedy these defects -- to inform employers accurately of the function of the office, to secure their interest and allay all suspicion as to the management of the office.

Almost as serious a hindrance to the success of a public office is the criticism and suspicion of the workingman. In many cities of the United States there is the same ignorance of the work of the public offices on the part of workers as among employers. In other cases, where labor is well organized, the offices are regarded with mild contempt and suspicion; contempt, because no organized labor men use them; suspicion, because they may be strike-breaking centers. More often, however, union and other skilled workers avoid the public offices because they have become resorts for substandard labor. Besides, within his own city, a skilled unionist prefers to rely upon the union secretary to get him a job. He does not relish the scrutiny and questioning which he must undergo at the public office. Other objections or criticisms were discussed

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in a previous chapter and need not be enumerated again here. It needs only to be pointed out that these and all other criticisms emphasize the necessity of giving labor an equal voice with the employer in the management of a public employment office.

#### Method of Selecting Members of the Advisory Board.

Contrary to the practice in New York and Illinois, where state officials name the members of the Advisory Boards, it seems best to allow the local organizations of employers and employes to name their own representatives. The federation of organized labor should name three representatives and the organization of employers a like number. In case, however, these organizations fail to name representatives for any reason, the Commissioner of the State Department of Labor should appoint representatives for them. The seventh member, representing the general public, in order to be acceptable to both parties, should be chosen by the six members already provided for, a unanimous vote being necessary to elect. This practice is followed in both Illinois and New York, although the members representing employers and employes are appointed by the state.<sup>1</sup> In Milwaukee the Advisory Board is a voluntary body, abstracted as a whole from the Mayor's Committee on Unemployment to assist the State Industrial Commission in organizing the Milwaukee employment bureau. Its members were named, originally, by the Mayor. In Great Britain, advisory committees are named by the Board of Trade.

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1. The Illinois Board appointed by the Governor has the power, however, of appointing the members of all local advisory boards, the composition of which is to be the same, in each case, as the general board for the State. The State Board selects four members -- two each of employers and employes -- and these four recommend the fifth member to the State Board.

### Term of Office of Members.

In the absence of any general practice in regard to the term of service, members should probably hold office for three years, provided that, of those first appointed, one representative each of the employers and employes shall serve only one year, one representative of each for two years, and the remainder, including the representative of the general public, for three years; thereafter all appointments to be for three years. Members should be eligible for re-appointment indefinitely and vacancies should be filled in the same way as the original appointments. In Illinois the term of office is fixed at five years, but in New York and Wisconsin no definite term is specified.

### Remuneration of Members.

The members of the local advisory board should serve without pay, but all expenses incurred in attending meetings or in the performance of other duties should be defrayed. This is the practice, in general, in other places, although the New York law is silent on the subject.

### Organization of the Advisory Board.

The chairman of the Advisory Board should be the member who represents the general public, since he is neutral as regards the conflicting interests of employers and employes. The other offices should be such as the Board finds necessary and should be filled from its <sup>own</sup> membership.

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### Equality of Voting Power.

In order to make effective the principle of joint-control, it is necessary that the voting power on any question shall be equally divided. The law establishing the office or the regulations set up by the Commissioner of Labor -- if he should organize the office upon his own legal authority -- should provide that at the request of a majority of either employers or employes on the Advisory Board, the voting upon any particular question should be so conducted as to give equality of voting power between the employers and employes, notwithstanding the absence of any member. The rule should further provide that the chairman shall have no vote on any question on which the equality of voting power has been claimed. This gives either party a veto upon measures they deem harmful to their interests. On all other questions a majority vote of the members present should prevail. Aside from these provisions the Advisory Board should have power to devise its own rules of procedure and its by-laws.<sup>1</sup>

### Powers and Duties of Advisory Board.

The powers and duties of the Advisory Board can be laid down only in a very general way. They might be summarized in a broad way as : Assisting the superintendent and staff of the employment office in every way possible to organize the local labor market. There are however, some fairly specific powers and duties

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1. This particular method of securing equality of voting power is the one in use in New York. Some such scheme has been advocated, however, by employment office experts for years. See discussions in Proceedings of the American Association of Public Employment Offices, U.S. Bulletin No. 192.

which may be enumerated:

(1) To meet monthly, or oftener if necessary, to examine the accounts of the office and to advise with the Superintendent upon matters which he may present or which the Board may wish to consider.

(2) To keep a record of its proceedings.

(3) To lay down general rules of management, within the law, for the Superintendent and his staff.

(4) To sit with the State Examining Board to choose a Superintendent, and to approve special civil service examinations for all office employes.

(5) To pass on all recommendations of the Superintendent for the appointment, promotion, or dismissal of employes.

(6) To represent the office in all legal and legislative matters, in the securing of adequate appropriations, etc.

(7) To study the local conditions of employment, needs of employers, etc., and devise methods of using the employment office in improving the situation.

(8) To exercise all other powers and privileges necessary to the successful working of the employment office which are not denied by law or delegated to other officials.

As has been pointed out before, advisory boards in other states, with the possible exception of New York, lack any real control over the work of the public offices. In the matter of giving

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advice and in co-operating with the Superintendent to solve local difficulties, however, they have been of service. In Milwaukee the board meets with the superintendent and the entire staff once a month for a general discussion of problems. The advice which the board gives is usually acted upon by the superintendent, but any important changes must be approved by the State Industrial Commission. In New York the law provides that the superintendents must consult with their advisory committees from time to time on matters pertaining to general policies and administration. The committees are active in the large work of studying local conditions and are empowered to appoint sub-committees to facilitate their work. The Illinois committees are purely advisory and their duties are very vaguely stated in the law. They have large latitude, however, for the exercise of considerable initiative in organizing the labor forces of the state.

#### THE SUPERINTENDENT AND THE OFFICE STAFF

The character and purpose of a public employment office make it necessary that its officials should be removed from the field of politics and that they be selected on the basis of fitness only. Accordingly, the superintendent of the Minneapolis office should be selected through a competitive examination designed to test his fitness for the position. In Wisconsin this consists of a written examination, counting three points, and an oral examination, counting seven points, designed to test the applicant's knowledge

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of the duties of an employment office superintendent, of the local conditions of employment and of local trades and industries, and also to determine his ability to handle men and manage the business successfully. In New York the applicants for State Director were required, as part of the examination, to submit plans for the organization and administration of a state system and of a local office. The examining board which selects the superintendent may be composed of the local Advisory Board and the State Examining Board, or the selection may be left wholly to the Advisory Board. In either case a special examination should be set up.<sup>1</sup>

In only the two states named is there a competitive standard set for the selection of superintendents. In all other states and in practically all municipalities, the local superintendents are appointive by the governor, the mayor, or some other official.

#### Qualifications of the Superintendent.

The success of a public employment office depends more upon the superintendent than upon any other individual or group of individuals. He is responsible for the conduct of the office and the training of the office staff, and the quality of service rendered to employers and employes depends upon his knowledge of the problem and his administrative ability. Mayer Bloomfield, in his study of the British system of labor exchanges, found that "the character of the service rendered by the English labor exchanges varied as the

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1. This provision need be followed, perhaps, only in the beginning, in choosing between applicants who have had no experience. When employment offices become standardized and large numbers of men have demonstrated their efficiency as superintendents, a superintendent brought in from the successful operation of an office in some other city should not need to pass such an examination. Theoral test, however, counting seven points, should be decisive in any case.

fitness of the officials in charge varied." <sup>1</sup> Mr. Chas. B. Barnes, Director of the New York Public Employment Offices, after an investigation of employment office conditions in the United States, said: "Our observation of the best offices in the country shows that to conduct an employment office successfully requires the same amount of training and the same intelligence as is required to conduct our best schools and colleges. And every superintendent should be of that grade."<sup>2</sup>

The qualifications, therefore, for the superintendent of the Minneapolis office should be high. He should, in the first place, be a student of social problems and should have made a study of unemployment and of employment problems. This does not mean that he must be an economist or a sociologist, but he should be a trained person and have a general knowledge of economic and social problems. Further, he should have a general knowledge of the industries and trades of the city and the kinds of labor most largely employed. It has been advocated by some that the superintendent should be taken from a local industry, but this is poor policy. Local affiliations are handicaps, and such a person would know little of other trades. Finally, the superintendent should be a close observer and good judge of human nature and character, and should be able to handle men. In other words, he must be able to "deliver the goods". To meet these requirements, the superintendent should have had a training in social work, in business, and in public affairs equiva-

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1. Am. Labor Legislation Review, Vol. 4, p.351.

2. "Report on the Condition and Management of Public Employment Offices in the United States". Proceedings of the Am. Ass'n. of Public Employment Offices, U.S. Bul. 192, p.72. The Wisconsin offices were not efficient until they were taken out of politics and able superintendents chosen.

lent to the training of the city superintendent of schools. At the present, of course, there are few who have had special training in methods of selection and placing of workers, and these could not be attracted by the meagre salaries paid by public employment offices. The New York and Wisconsin methods of selecting superintendents, however, insure a man of high general ability.

The superintendent should not be a political appointee or have political affiliations. Many offices in the United States are hindered from doing efficient work by the fact of the political tenure of the superintendent and staff, for it takes a long time to develop an experienced and expert office force. Even where politics is not a serious factor, the men in charge have, as a rule, lacked both training and natural ability. There has been a feeling among those in authority that "any man can run an employment bureau, and hence men have been made superintendents because of personal likeableness, political pull, or because they were war veterans or labor leaders. There is little hope of getting the proper men for superintendents until employment office work becomes recognized as a profession and the salaries become such as to attract men of ability.

#### Powers and Duties of the Superintendent.

In general, it is the duty of the superintendent to make the employment office fulfil its function. In the performance of this duty he should be given wide powers and an almost free hand. The responsibility which rests upon him for the success of the office

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will insure employers, employes, and the public against an abuse of that power. His first and most important duty, perhaps, is the general and detailed supervision of the office force and work, in the interest of developing an expert administrative machine. Next in importance is his duty of securing the patronage of employers and employes. He should become acquainted with the large employers of labor in the city and familiarize himself with their needs. Much of his time should be devoted to this work and he should be free from routine office work in order to accomplish this task well. He should formulate definite solicitation methods and train other members of the office staff in the work. Reports of the business of the office form an important part of the superintendent's work, and he should take care to see that the information given is worth while and published in usable form. The superintendent should advise regularly with the Advisory Board and submit to it all matters which should have its attention, such as recommendations as to the appointment, promotion, or dismissal of employes, finances, general policies, etc. Another important task is that of studying the general employment conditions of the community, getting acquainted with the seasonal character and varying demands for labor, as well as impending changes in the situation. In this connection he should keep tab on building projects and other big contracts and secure the patronage of the contractors. His other duties are outside the sphere of immediate employment office work but are no less important.

They include the duty of becoming a well-known and respected man in public affairs. Which means that the superintendent should become a member of various public bodies, assume a place of leadership in them, keep abreast of all public activities -- and talk his work. The superintendent of the Minneapolis office should, for example, be an influential member of the Civic and Commerce Association, the Central Council of Social Agencies, Mayor's Advisory Committee, etc. in which organizations he should advertise his work and secure its recognition. He should take advantage of opportunities to address meetings concerning employment work and should practice the art of the press agent. In short, the superintendent should keep the public employment office and its work continually before the employer, the worker, and the public, and administer his office so well that he can back up his word with worth.

#### Salary of the Superintendent.

Minneapolis should pay the superintendent of its public employment office at least \$2500 per year. In comparison with the salary now paid by the Minnesota Free Employment Offices and with others, of better reputations, this figure seems pretty high. And, in fact, it is high. If Minneapolis wants an efficient office and a superintendent who will measure up to the qualifications set in the foregoing pages, \$2500 is the minimum which she can expect to pay. At present, in the United States, no other public employment office

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pays so high a salary, the nearest approach being \$2000, paid to the superintendent in New York. Illinois pays the General Superintendent in Chicago \$1800 and the Boston superintendent receives a like amount. The local superintendents in New York receive \$1500; the superintendent at Milwaukee \$1360; the superintendent at Indianapolis \$1500; in other cities salaries run as low as \$730. By offering \$3500 for a superintendent, Minneapolis should be able to get the ablest and most experienced employment office manager in the country and for the sake of an efficient office it should strive to do so. Even that figure is all too low when compared to the salaries in other businesses which require no more ability than is needed for a capable employment office manager.<sup>1</sup>

#### Other Office Employes.

Second only in importance to an able superintendent is an efficient and interested office staff. In large part, to be sure, the efficiency of the staff will depend upon the superintendent, but the method of choosing them in the first place is a matter of great importance. All public employment offices in the United States which have attained a measure of success agree that all employes should be chosen under regular civil service rules from eligibility lists based upon success in special competitive examinations. The examination should test the applicants' fitness for employment office work and general knowledge of employment problems. For those who are to do

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1. Mr. William H. Baldwin, of Washington, D. C., thinks that the ability required is "similar to that required to run a railroad". See his letter to Dr. E. T. Devine, in Devine, An Employment Bureau in New York, pp. 41-3.

placement work, the examination should approach that set up for the superintendent as regards ability to handle and judge men and a general knowledge of industries and trades. Clerical employes may be chosen from the regular civil service lists for this class of positions. The superintendent of the office should make recommendations for appointment to the Advisory Board from these eligibility lists.

Notable examples of the efficiency of public employment offices under the civil service are furnished by New York, Wisconsin, and Massachusetts, in this country, and Great Britain, in Europe. In New York the employes are chosen from a special civil service list and, during the installation of the system, the local superintendents were given two weeks of training at the Brooklyn office before taking charge of the offices out in the state. Wisconsin has a special examination under the civil service for employment office workers and a special examining board for local superintendents. Boston, Mass., used a special examination in the beginning, but since only a few employes are taken on each year, vacancies are now filled by requisition from persons on the eligible list who have taken the regular clerical and stenographic examinations, without regard to the service required of them. Los Angeles uses the city civil service commission and provides a special form of examination. In Great Britain the entire employment office force, numbering over 3,500, come under the national civil service rules.

Civil service regulation implies that efficiency is the watchword for office employes and that they will be retained or promoted on the basis of merit alone. It further implies and necessitates an adequate number of clerks and stenographers, competent and interested, to take care of the business of the office. And these implications presuppose that the salaries offered should be on a par with those offered for work requiring equal ability in other lines. Furthermore, the salary schedules should be elastic so as to encourage and reward efficiency.

#### Salaries of Office Employes.

Proceeding on the assumption that the Minneapolis office will attempt to be efficient on a moderate scale at first rather than risk mediocrity in its standard of work in attempting to operate on a large scale, the office staff should be small at first and be composed of very capable workers. On this basis, there should be a line-up something like the following:

Superintendent - - - - -	\$3500
Ass't Supt. and Placement Secretary for skilled men - - - - -	1800
Placement Secretary, Unskilled men - - - - -	1500
Placement Secretary, Women - - - - -	1300
Chief Clerk and Statistician - - - - -	1000
Record Clerk and Stenographer - - - - -	900
Telephone Operator - - - - -	730

This office force and salary list compare favorably with those of the best offices. Milwaukee, ranked as one of the best offices in the United States, has only five employes, including the superintendent, and the salaries range from \$1080 down to half that amount, with no elasticity "to be noticeable". The Boston office

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employs seventeen persons, including the superintendent and three laborers. Salaries for clerks, placement and otherwise, range from \$950 to \$750, and are fixed by law, which requires classification and grading of clerks in the state service. The salaries increase automatically on the basis of tenure up to \$750 per year, after which promotions may be made on the basis of efficiency. Chicago offices have thirty-four employes in addition to the superintendent. Their salaries vary from \$1500 for the chief clerk and department superintendents, \$1200 for the assistant department superintendents, to less than \$800 for telephone operators. These salaries are increased from time to time if the appropriations are sufficient. The entire force for all five offices in the state of New York numbers thirty-five at present, with salaries ranging from \$1500 down to \$480, according to grade. The salaries are not subject to adjustment on the basis of efficiency. With a few possible exceptions, such as Los Angeles which does not publish its salary list, no other employment offices in the United States have office forces large enough or well enough paid to conduct the offices with success. Indianapolis pays the superintendent \$1500, but furnishes only one, poorly paid, assistant. Louisville, Ky. has a superintendent and a female assistant whose salaries are \$960 and \$600 respectively. At Tacoma, Washington, the distributing officer in charge of the government department receives \$115 per month, while the municipal superintendent receives only \$90.

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### The Assistant Superintendent.

The Assistant Superintendent has for his principal task the placement of skilled workers, but he is also an understudy to the superintendent and performs the latter's duties in his absence. Consequently he should have had some training or experience -- or both -- in social problems and in employment work, if possible, and should be a young man of business and clerical ability. As the principal field worker, next to the superintendent, he should have the ability to meet and interest employers; as Assistant Superintendent, he should be able to master quickly the principles of employment office management and the details of its administration. Finally, as placement secretary for skilled men, he should have some knowledge of the important trades and industries of the city, and special ability to "size up" applicants for employment. The possession of these qualifications and the efficient performance of the duties assigned to him, will fit the Assistant Superintendent well to step into the shoes of the Superintendent or take charge of an employment office elsewhere.

### Placement Secretary -- Unskilled Men.

This official will have charge of the placement of common labor and casual workers, and will have as his special duty the solving of the problems of decausalisation, caring for the handicapped, and eliminating from the labor market all those who are inefficient and unemployable for any reason. The work with the

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handicapped men will probably be small in the beginning, and should never be allowed to interfere with the more important task of furnishing reliable manual laborers to employers. Until a special department for the handicapped can be installed, the serving of this class of workers should be left almost wholly to the various charitable and philanthropic agencies. To the difficult task of decasualizing casual labor, the secretary of the unskilled labor department should bring considerable executive ability, a knowledge of the more general local fluctuations in the demand for labor in the important industries, and a genuine desire to make the office a clearing house for common labor.

Placement Secretary, Women's Department.

All the workers in the female department should be women. The secretary should be a woman of some training and experience in social work, with an every-day working acquaintance with the industries in which women and girls are employed. Along with this, she should be able to be a real friend of women applicants and to secure their confidence. Her chief task is the placing of workers in suitable employment, but she has also the important duty of driving the inefficient and half-employables from the labor market and concentrating all the offers of employment upon the fewest possible able and reliable workers. She must draw a distinct line between relief work and employment work, forcing the former upon the organizations having to do with such matters. These and

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other problems will be discussed fully in connection with the organization of the Woman's Department.

#### Placement Secretary -- Juvenile Department.

The Juvenile Department should be in the hands of a vocational guidance expert, both from the point of training and experience. He should have full and complete knowledge of all industries employing juveniles both as to conditions of employment, wages, hours, moral and sanitary environment, but also as to the opportunities for advancement. This presupposes a wide acquaintance with employers and their needs and first hand information of factory and office requirements. On the other hand, the director of the juvenile branch should be able to handle boys and judge their fitness for the various tasks. His assistant should be a woman, and should do for girls what the director does for boys. It is especially necessary that she should be conversant with the conditions of employment in establishments to which girls are sent, particularly in regard to their moral character. In training and general ability, the assistant should be in no way inferior to the director.

#### Other Employees.

Civil service regulations should insure competent office help in the way of clerks and stenographers. However, interest in the work and a desire to engage permanently in employment office work should be added to mere clerical ability as necessary qualifications.

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This probably means that applicants will have had some training in general social problems. The keeping of complete and accurate systems of records and the compiling of statistical material constitute the important tasks of the clerks and this work is highly important, for the success of the office depends largely upon its record system.

## Chapter Three (Continued)

## Departments of the Public Employment Office.

Sex lines form the primary basis of division into departments in public employment offices, as in ordinary public buildings and waiting rooms. This division is absolutely essential to any measure of success and is observed at present in all offices which are actually attempting placement work. For the efficient conduct of an office, however, there must be the further division on the basis of skill. Skilled workers do not care to use the same registration and waiting room with unskilled labor and will not patronize an office freely where the distinction is not made. The division assists the office better to classify and serve both employers and employes and allows specialization of the office force. The public offices in the United States which have led the way and occupy the front rank are all organized on this basis, and the best offices have these divisions for both men and women, making four departments in all. In some cases the men's department is divided while all women are handled in one department. In every public office there should be a further division, based on age, making possible the establishment of a juvenile department. The placement of minors presents a different, more difficult, and more important problem than the placement of adults and, since its work must be closely connected with the public schools, a separate department must be maintained. Before 1914 juvenile employment work was performed, nominally, in Indiana and Massachusetts by the public

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offices, but took the form mostly of vocational counselling in a haphazard way. Since that time, and especially since the organization of the girl's bureau in Cleveland, some attention has been given to meeting the problem. At the present time, Milwaukee, Boston, and Cleveland are actually doing placement work for juveniles through separate departments. The New York law of 1914 authorized the establishment of juvenile departments, but the Director has preferred to develop the other departments to a high degree of efficiency before attempting the more difficult task of juvenile branches. According to the Annual Report of 1915 it was expected that such branches would be established during the following year. The superintendent of the Los Angeles Bureau is alive to the need of a juvenile department and is attempting to secure an appropriation large enough to make one possible.<sup>1</sup>

With the increasing growth of public employment offices, further subdivision of the main departments may be made, this time along vocational or occupational lines. Special departments may be established for trades which predominate in the city, thus allowing increased specialization in the office force and, consequently, better service to employers. A beginning in this direction has been made in Chicago, Boston, and Milwaukee. In only one instance -- in the Municipal Bureau of New York City, has an elaborate division been attempted. In this office there are nine departments: Male - (1) mercantile help, (2) industrial and mechanical, (3) farm hands

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1. See Third Annual Report. p.14.

and general labor, (4) hotel, restaurant, and culinary, (4) juvenile; Female - (1) mercantile and factory, (2) hotel, restaurant and culinary, (3) institution help, (4) domestic and day workers. The divisions, of course, which should be made in any particular city would be determined by the occupational classes present, and the number would depend upon the sufficiency of office help and of funds. It is probable that, before other divisions should be added in any office to the ones enumerated above, the juvenile branch should be divided on the basis of sex and increased attention be given to it.

The Minneapolis Public Employment Office should adopt a middle ground policy, perhaps, at the start and not attempt an elaborate organization. When the efficiency of the office is established, the confidence of employers and public gained, adequate appropriations secured, and occupational groups determined, then it will be time to enlarge the scope of the work. The initial size and scope will probably be determined by such practical considerations as funds available, size and arrangement of quarters secured, and the number of capable office employees provided. To meet the local situation with even a moderate degree of success, the Minneapolis office should have at least four separate departments: (1) Male skilled department, in charge of the Assistant Superintendent, serving workers in the professional and technical occupations, industrial and mechanical trades, and mercantile, hotel and restaurant help; (2) Male unskilled department, having to do with the placing of common labor, casuals, job-workers, farm hands, and a majority of the handicapped cases; (3) Women's Department, serving

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all classes of women workers; (4) Juvenile Department, serving all juveniles, -- ages 14 to 21 years. At the earliest possible date the women's department should be divided into skilled and unskilled departments, for the lines of cleavage between domestics, hotel and restaurant, institution help, and day workers, on the one hand, and the other classes of women workers, such as factory, store, clerical and professional help, can be clearly drawn and divides women workers into two distinct types. The Women's and Girls' Bureau at Cleveland is unique in its divisions, which comprise a vocational guidance department, a recreation department, and an immigration department. The Women's Department of the Brooklyn, New York office found two divisions necessary. According to the superintendent of the department, "only the unfit would have survived if the division had not been made".<sup>1</sup>

**Women's Department -- Organization and Principles of  
Management.**

The women's division of a public employment office presents problems which are peculiarly its own and in a few important particulars differs in organization and management from the male departments. Consequently it calls for separate treatment.

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1. "The Placing of Women by Public Employment Offices," by Louise C. Odendorantz, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Bulletin No. 193, p.133.

### Registration of Applicants.

The first principle of registration, for women as well as for men, is to register all who apply for work. The registration blank should correspond closely to that used for men, except that the question as to willingness to go out of the city may be omitted and more emphasis should be put upon references from past employers. Separate hours of registration should be arranged and enforced since the one department must handle all classes of women and they do not mix to advantage. Day-workers should have a special time for registration as should cooks and domestic workers. Renewals must be made every two weeks and may be made by telephone and post card as well as by personal call. A column on the registration card should be reserved for entering the dates of renewals.

Private interviews of applicants should be the rule in the women's department so far as possible. This practice will get better results, for it adds the personal touch which is so necessary in working with women. Besides, the private interview will secure more accurate information about the applicant and consequently enable the secretary to attain greater efficiency in placement. Private interviews have been tried out in Milwaukee in the women's department and found to be very advantageous.<sup>1</sup>

### Securing the Patronage of Employers.

The most successful method of securing positions for applicants and getting applications for help is by personal solicitation and

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1. See article by Mrs. W.L. Essman, "The Women's Department of a Free Employment Office," U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Bulletin, No. 192, p.31-34.

canvassing on the part of the placement secretary of the women's department and her assistants. Hotels, restaurants, laundries, hospitals, and other such establishments should be visited and the employers made acquainted with the work of the department and its capacity to serve him. Another worker should visit the factories, department stores, and offices for the same purpose. These visits accomplish the double purpose of securing patronage and giving the office the information it needs as to the requirements of the employers and the conditions of employment in the various establishments. The women of the Brooklyn office have used personal solicitation with remarkable success for the past two years.<sup>1</sup>

#### Selection of Proper Applicants for Positions.

In order to safeguard the interests of both employers and employees, certain general principles must be taken into consideration in selecting applicants to be sent to employers. The secretary should (1) know the applicant, through careful questioning in a private interview and the information recorded on the application blank, and from an investigation of the references given; (2) know the position to be filled, by visiting the plant and securing first hand information as to conditions, wages, hours, skill and knowledge required; and, (3) should know the employer, through personal interview and an investigation, if there are any doubts, of his record and his treatment of employees. The special care thus taken in placing women is necessary in order to protect them

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1. See article by Louise C. Odenrantz, loc.cit., p.123 ff.

against being sent to questionable places of employment, unsanitary factories, or where the surroundings, for any reason, are unwholesome. This practice is based on the accepted theory that women in industry need greater protection from grasping employers than do men.

#### Routine of "Send-out" and "Follow-up" System.

When a woman is selected to apply for a position, she is supplied with an introduction card giving full information as to where she is to go, to whom she is to apply, and when to apply. This card is especially necessary and valuable for women in going to strange establishments. Of even greater importance, however, is a checking-up system to keep track of the woman placed, and follow up her record. A system of symbols identical to or similar to the one used in the male departments should be used to record such results as "hired", "hired and left", "hired and did not report", "not hired", "did not report", etc. When the applicant applies to the employer, she is given the introduction card and is asked to make on it the proper notation as to whether or not the person was hired. It is then to be mailed back to the office. Or, if the applicant is not hired, she may bring the card back to the office. If the woman is hired and returns later for another job, her record should be investigated before she is sent out again. The remaining records for the female department should be the same as those used in the male departments, though the color of the cards

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should be different in order to facilitate the work of the clerks. In addition, however, there may well be kept a file in which are listed the day-work women or other class of workers in daily demand having telephones. This will facilitate greatly the filling of rush orders for this class of work. The plan is used in the women's department at Milwaukee and is recommended highly.

#### Women's Department Problems.

The women's department stands out distinct from the male departments as being something more than the mere business proposition of placing workers in positions suited to their abilities. It is related to the juvenile department in that, as between service to the individual and service to the employer, the emphasis is upon the former, though it is not to be implied from this that both are not often best served in this way. Women, like children, receive greater protection from the law, for the sake of general welfare, and an employment office is only observing this principle when it seeks to discriminate, if such it may be called, between the interests of the worker and the interests of the employer. Most of the problems of the women's division arise out of this situation.

The most important and difficult problem, undoubtedly, is that of the decasualisation of the casual workers among the women. Most of the so-called day-workers secure much less than enough work to keep them busy and their earnings are too meagre to afford them a moderate living. The secretary of the department, but keeping

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accurate records, must drive out the least efficient and the near-dependents and seek to concentrate all day-work upon the fewest possible workers of the best and most reliable class.

Closely connected with this problem is that of dove-tailing seasonal labor. This presupposes a thorough knowledge of women's industries and of their busy and slack seasons. With some ingenuity it is possible to turn factory girls into summer hotel help, turn sales girls into domestics, and department store girls into cashiers in summer amusements places.

A most perplexing problem is that of placing middle-aged women, deserted, widowed, or married women with dependents who have suddenly been reduced to the necessity of work. The unmarried mothers present even a harder problem. As a rule these women do not know what opportunities for work are open. They will accept anything and most of them go into day-work when they may have had experience in technical lines. A class of poorly equipped "discontents" who won't stay "put" must also be disposed of. They are the ones who early got into blind alleys, acquired the habit of shifting jobs and never stay long at any one thing. On the same level with them is a class of young clerical workers who hold themselves above factory work, but have not had sufficient education or special training to succeed in the already crowded field of office work. And yet they cannot be persuaded to get into other work. There is often to be found a class of domestic-help girls who are fitted for something better but need guidance and encouragement. The department secretary must be able to make over this material to supply the demands of employers who are willing to take untrained

but intelligent workers. And then comes the class of girls from the country districts who want to come to the city and do factory or clerical work. The problem here is largely solved if the office can get the girls to write in for information as to opportunities before they start for the city. When this is done it is generally possible to persuade most of them to remain in the country; the others can be protected and placed in good positions without delay. Finally, there is the problem of handling relief cases. Many such cases are sent to the office by relief agencies who think that applicants are given jobs because they are needy instead of because they are fit for the jobs. The secretary, of course, cannot allow her department to descend to the plane of charity relief, but she should encourage all relief agencies to "clear" through her department in getting jobs for all capable workers. Under no consideration should she try to induce employers to take under-grade workers. She should not hesitate, however, to use the knowledge that comes to her -- "as standing on a pinnacle <sup>for</sup> between the demand/and supply of women workers --" for the social betterment of the community.

#### The Juvenile Branch.

The problems of the juvenile branch of the public employment office are so different as regards fundamental policy from the adult departments that, regarded in one way, the subject is almost an another field. From the point of view of organizing the labor market, however, its relation to the whole problem of employment and unemployment is so fundamental that it becomes a most important

subject of inquiry. The chief differences of principle may be stated as follows: (1) the necessity of centering care upon the worker, regardless of the effect upon industry; (2) the necessity of having some sort of dual control, such as the Board of Education and a special Advisory Board on Juvenile Employment; (3) the necessity of educating the worker and influencing the choice of occupation; (4) the necessity of following up the worker after he is placed; and, finally, (5) the necessity in every question of taking into consideration the "long run" factors.

These statements of differences from the adult departments indicate the general principles which should underlie the organization and administration of the juvenile department. It must be borne in mind, in the first place, that the work of the department consists not only in assisting the youthful applicants to obtain employment but to choose their employment -- to determine their careers or life work. It is just as important to give a boy the right job as to give him a job at all, and, much more than adults, he needs to be protected against a possible wrong choice. The employment office, standing at the entrance to the industrial world, must point the way and point truly. In order to do so, the office must possess information, not merely as to openings, but also as to conditions and prospects in the various trades. The endeavor must be to place young workers where they will have opportunity for industrial or other advanced training and for real advancement, instead of leaving them to drift into "blind-alley" occupations or become "job-tramps".<sup>1</sup> In order to go to the root

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1. Cf. Andrews: op. cit., loc. cit., pp.177-9.

of the problem of unemployment, we must start with the children and see to it that they do not drift into blind alleys, as they have so largely done in the past. A further, and most important principle, is that the juvenile department must be closely connected with the local educational system.<sup>1</sup> This plan puts the department automatically in touch with the young workers as they leave school and makes it possible to further the educational needs of juveniles as well as their need for employment. There should be further co-operation with the City Health Department, with trade unions and employers' organizations.<sup>2</sup>

In conformance with its special principles, the juvenile department should use its influence with children and parents to induce the children to remain in school as long as possible, to return to school in some cases, or to attend continuation or night schools. In other words, the department must not measure its efficiency by the number and rapidity of its placements and must not, in any case, allow its placement work to become a cause of children leaving school earlier than they do at present. Instead, it should make it possible

1. For a discussion of the methods of cooperation between the Board of Education and the juvenile placement department, see a description of the English System of Labor Exchanges, Appendix I; or see Lasker, same title, U.S. Bulletin, Bureau of Labor Statistics, No. 206. An excellent review of this subject, as well as the whole problem of juvenile exchanges, is to be found in the Am. Lab. Legl Review, June 1915, by Elsa Ualand.

2. "A bureau of vocational guidance or placement will never be made effective until in some way cooperative relations are established between such a bureau--having to do with youth as they leave school--and an employment managers' association which has to do with their selection and placement in plants." C.A. Prosser, of Dunwoody Institute, Proceedings, Employment Managers Conference, Minneapolis, Loc. cit. p. 46.

Dunwoody Institute has understandings with 24 different trades and industries where employers have agreed to apply to the Institute as the first source of supply for new workers.

The idea presented by Dr. Prosser is a good one when the number of young workers handled is comparatively small, as is the case at

for the schools to give the proper kind of industrial and commercial training in the public schools by furnishing data as to opportunities and conditions in the various industries and occupations open to juveniles. Instruction of this sort should begin early and be of a thorough practical character. This will help solve the problem of early school-leaving and will insure the juvenile worker rapid advancement when he does leave school to go to work.

In placing juvenile workers, the placement department must be careful to get full particulars as to their qualifications. It is not sufficient to get the particulars of industrial training or experience, but personal qualities, temperament, aptitude, must be known and taken into account. Most of the information needed can be supplied by the teachers in the school attended just previous to his seeking a position, but parents and other interested persons should be consulted where possible. Finally, the juvenile department has not finished its work when it has placed its applicants in what is believed to be suitable employment. A follow-up system must be maintained to keep in touch with the "placements" and see whether the positions are suited to their several abilities. If they are, every effort must be made, if necessary, to see that the employment is retained. In other words, the general welfare of the juvenile worker must be watched over carefully as long as it is necessary -- at least until he becomes of age. This follow-up work must be systematically done, and supervised by the juvenile department, but parents and teachers may be used in volunteer work.

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at Dunwoody Institute. It does not apply when the Juvenile placement department is made the sole reliable source of supply of juveniles in the city. Employers must come to it for help regardless of previous agreement.

The beneficial results of this system are apparent, as far as the individuals are concerned. But it has the further merit of checking up on the value of an education and would furnish much valuable data as to the features which are desirable in school curricula.

#### The Present Situation.

Vocational guidance and juvenile placement have been subjects of discussion in educational and child labor circles for some time, but very little has been done in the United States to handle these problems in any adequate or practicable manner. At present, for the most part, children enter industry wholly unadvised and take the first work that offers, regardless of fitness or of opportunity, as an adult, to make a living at it.<sup>1</sup> Thus we have thousands of errand boys, elevator operators, and sales-girls in department stores who are engaged as they are for no other reason except that the particular job was the first, or the best, that came within their narrow circle of opportunities. Where a youngster purposely seeks employment in a particular line, the reason may be no more weighty, perhaps, than that a cousin has said, "Electricians have a good trade," or that a mother has remarked, "It is fine to be a dressmaker", but with no other notion at all of what he or she can do.<sup>2</sup> Juvenile labor is highly immobile; it must get work close to its center -- the home. The vocational guidance survey of New York found that of the jobs held by boys investigated in one school district, 80 per cent were within half mile of this school district.

1. Cf. Leiserson, *op.cit.loc.cit.*, p.329.

2. Elva Ueland, "Juvenile Employment Exchanges", *American Labor Leg. Review*, Vol.5, No.3, p.307.

Despite the fact that these boys were unemployed about one-fourth of the time, it was out of the question to look for a job farther away. The chance to save carfare by living near home forbade it. As a rule, children find work according to local demand.

As a result of these facts many trades and occupations are over-crowded. This keeps wages low and makes the chances for advancement slight. A visitor to a New York school several years ago discovered that every other boy of school-leaving age wanted to be an electrician. "It was a fad. Thomas A. Edison had cast glamor and romance upon the profession that spread to the nearest bell wiper."<sup>1</sup> Another result is that the youth are continually throwing up their jobs in the hope of something better, and rapidly degenerate into restless "job tramps", casuals, and "discontents". The net result of the whole situation is to increase the army of low paid child labor, much of it in competition with adult labor -- which lowers wages all around --, under-employment, and the constant recruiting of the army of the unemployed and unemployable from the young workers who are turned off from the errand jobs and from other monotonous factory duties which new and younger and cheaper workers can undertake. And all this after the state has spent thousands of dollars in their education for useful citizenship!

Despite the conditions as thus presented, there are less than a half dozen instances in the whole United States where public employment offices are attempting definite and specialized vocational guidance and placement. Massachusetts, Indiana, Los Angeles, and Milwaukee have separate departments for boys. No bureau in the

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1. Elsa Ueland, op. cit., loc.cit. p.209.

United States, public or private, provides for a girls' department separate from its women's department.<sup>1</sup> The New York offices are just establishing their juvenile branches and the organization of the work is not yet known. Massachusetts maintains a separate registration department for boys and has a special clerk for that work. A personal interview with each applicant is the only method, however, of determining his qualifications and helping him into the proper job. No follow-up work is attempted. The age limit is elastic and boys who have trades are referred to the skilled department no matter what their ages. All registrations are kept in the same file, so that all clerks may have access to it. The Massachusetts Compulsory Continuation School law applying to boys between the ages of 14 and 16 helps the work of the bureau greatly, for boys between those ages are not ready to go into steady work of any kind and are not efficient. Speaking of the work of the office for boys, Mr. Gettemy says: "We have not given a great amount of intensive attention to the subject of vocational guidance. There appears to be an increasing sentiment among those who have studied this question that the proper authority to undertake it most intelligently is the school department".<sup>2</sup> The work done in Milwaukee is similar to that in Boston and has not been highly developed. In Los Angeles juvenile placement is still incidental to the other work of the office because sufficient funds are not available for establishing a separate department. The urgent need for a separate department is recognized. A few other offices

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1. Ibid. p.314.

2. Quoted from answer to questionnaire.

in addition to those mentioned, admit the need for special work for juveniles but are able at present only to "give advice" to youthful applicants. In the countries of Europe, however, and particularly in England and Germany, vocational guidance and placement has been given special attention. In fact, the most successful part of the work of the labor exchanges in England has been the work of the juvenile branches.<sup>1</sup>

#### Organization of the Juvenile Department for Minneapolis.

The juvenile department of the Minneapolis Public Employment Office should be organized along the lines of the existing Vocational Guidance and School Attendance Department, and should be in charge of the director of that department and his assistants. This department is now organized under the local Board of Education and this arrangement should be continued, since the support of the department is to come from the treasury of the school system. The present members of the department connected with vocational guidance and placement should be retained, but two additional workers should be added, one man and one woman, to serve as field workers and clerks. Other office employes may be necessary for record and statistical purposes. The director of the department and his staff must co-operate with the superintendent of the employment office and should be subject to the latter's general supervision as to policies and methods of placement work. This will necessi-

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1. For a critical discussion and general summary of the work of juvenile exchanges in England and Germany, see article by Miss Ueland, loc.cit., pp.223-234. See also Lasker, op.cit., U.S. Bulletin No. 208, for a description of the English system.

tate close co-operation between the employment office officials and the school system through the Board of Education. This can be accomplished by the establishment of a special Advisory Board representing both interests. Since the interests of the child must dominate, wherever the control is placed, a system of joint control should easily be agreed upon.

The special advisory board should be composed of representatives of employers, of employes, of the Board of Education, and of the general public. In addition, there should be a representative of the Parent-Teachers' Association, since this organization is strong in the city. The superintendent or the chairman of the Advisory Board of the employment office might well be a member, ex officio, of the juvenile board. The English juvenile boards are organized somewhat along these lines, being composed of nominees from the local educational authority, representatives of employers and workpeople, and teachers and other interested persons. The special advisory board is also to be used in the New York system. Mr. Andrews suggests a special sub-committee of the General Advisory Board.<sup>1</sup> The exact composition is not a matter of great importance so long as persons are appointed who have the interests of juvenile workers at heart and who have an intelligent comprehension of the problem of juvenile guidance and placement. The members may be chosen by the General Advisory Board, as a special sub-committee, or as a separate committee. This method would have the advantage of insuring close co-operation in the work and

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1. See discussion in Amer. Labor Legislation Review, Vol.5, pp.177-178.

the members could be nominated by the organizations concerned. However, these organizations could be allowed to name their representatives finally and the efficiency of the work should not suffer by that fact.

The essential qualification of members of the advisory board should be intelligent interest in the work to be done. The members should also be willing and able to give time and personal attention to assisting in the work, such as advising with parents and children. Further, they should possess experience or knowledge of the educational system and of other conditions affecting juveniles. Among the duties of the members, in addition to giving personal attention to phases of the work, the principal service should be that of advising with the director and his assistants with regard to methods, and practices in meeting the problems of the juvenile department. Also, it should be their duty "to take steps either by themselves or in co-operation with other bodies or persons, to give information, advice, and assistance to boys and girls and their parents with respect to the choice of employment and other matters bearing thereon".<sup>1</sup>

Co-operation with the school system should be close and sympathetic. The schools should give the placement department all the information possible about those seeking employment and the employment department should furnish all the information possible about local industrial and commercial opportunities so that the schools may fit students definitely for the situation that will have to be faced. The Vocational Guidance and Placement departments should get

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1. See provisions of the New York law pertaining to public employment offices, Section 66 j.

reports from the schools and the records of all pupils who are about to graduate or leave school. Special "school-leaving" forms should be provided to school officials upon which to secure information as to: physical and mental characteristics; ability; health; probable date of leaving school; the standard or grade reached; particulars about the kind of employment desired and the further education recommended. This information should be secured by teachers or principals, and sent to the employment department. The teacher or principal may advise the prospective applicant for employment as to his or her best interests, but the burden of such work should fall upon the vocational guidance experts who will be integral parts of the school system and acquainted, as far as possible, with the children of school-leaving age. The entire system -- giving advice, vocational guidance, placement work, and the follow-up system -- should be combined into one department, together with the attendance work, vocational and industrial education, and the continuation or night schools.

#### Registration and Placement.

A special registration blank should be used by the placement department. It should contain the principal questions addressed to adults on the regular office registration cards, but additional questions such as: name of last school attended; date of leaving; standard reached; intention of attending continuation school -- when, what subjects; whether employed part time before leaving day-school -- at what, how long, etc. At the time of registration each applicant should be privately interviewed -- the boys by the

director and the girls by the assistant. The parents of children may be present at this interview, though, presumably, they have been consulted and advised with by the vocational guidance experts before the child left school. The information secured through this interview, added to that contained on the school-leaving form-- which is the result of a study of the pupil made over a considerable period of time -- gives a very thorough basis for judging the qualifications and fitness of each applicant and should make it possible to attain a high degree of efficiency in placement. If the applicant has been at work before, whether placed by the department or not, his industrial and home record should be secured by the trained field workers and investigators, and added to his school record which should be on file.

Placement of juveniles should be made according to aptitudes and opportunities. That is, the youth's interests and proven abilities should be the first consideration, but the department must also take account of the opportunities for advancement in the line of work chosen, the character of the employment -- as to wages, hours, and conditions of labor, -- and finally, the character of the employer in the particular establishment where work is offered. In England the juvenile branch managers, in effect, boycott firms which do not keep good conditions and give a chance for advancement to young workers. This leads to improvement in conditions. Of course, the function of the placement department can hardly extend beyond securing opportunities for employment and giving expert advice to applicants and their parents. There can be no compulsion exerted in the matter whatever if the advice is rejected and there

should be no discrimination against applicants on this account.

The methods of securing patronage from employers which should be used are for the most part identical with those advocated for the adult departments. This work should be more easily accomplished, however, because of the fact that there is no competition from private agencies. The only methods now in use to secure juvenile help are: the "card in the window", newspaper advertising, and getting workers to bring in friends. To a very limited extent the employers apply to high schools for workers, but the Girls Vocational High School and Dunwoody Institute are recognized sources of this class of help -- for the better class of workers. Office boys, errand boys, helpers of all sorts, wagon boys, workers in factories, -- and others, are mostly secured in the hit-and-miss fashion prevailing for adult workers. A juvenile employment department should easily become the recognized source of juvenile workers of ability and some training who can be made into skilled and valuable employes. It should not supply workers for low paid "blind-alley" employments. To guard against this, employers must be carefully investigated in all cases where the character of the employment and the employer are not well known. This is particularly necessary in the case of young girls. Every safeguard and precaution possible should be taken to make sure that they are not sent to establishments where the environment, morally or physically, is not good.

Equally important with the work of vocational guidance and the proper placement of young workers is that of the "follow-up". The department, through its special field-workers and investigators,

should keep in touch with the workers it has placed in order to keep them steady and stimulate their interest and ambition. This service should probably extend to all juveniles -- to all workers between the age limits,<sup>1</sup> whether they were placed by the department or not. The good influence of the department would thus be extended and would aid in eventually bringing all placement work in to its hands. Outside agencies may be called upon to co-operate in this part of the work, in addition to the work of parents, but the entire work should be closely supervised by the department. In England and in connection with the Women's and Girl's Bureau of Cleveland, visitors' committees of trained workers were organized for this purpose.<sup>2</sup> No time limit can be set for the continuance of follow-up work. In no case should it last less than one year and might well last in most cases until the worker is 18 years of age. The records gathered by these visitors are invaluable to employers and to the office in its further dealings with the individual.

#### Reasons for Connection with Employment Office.

From the preceding discussion of the organization and methods of the Juvenile Department, it may not be entirely clear why it should be in any way connected with the employment bureau rather than organized as a separate and distinct institution. The reason for this connection is, primarily, that it should tend to secure

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1. As was indicated above, no definite age limits can be established. One boy may have mastered a trade and taken up his life work at the age of 16 or 17. He should be dealt with altogether, perhaps, by the skilled branch of the adult bureau. Another boy, at 18, may have just come from school without much idea of what he wants to do. He should be taken care of by the Juvenile Department. This elasticity of the age limit is based soundly upon the fact that the

greater confidence in the work of the department on the part of employers. since the adult departments are under the joint control of employers and labor and prescribe the general policies of the juvenile branch, it is to be presumed that the interests of these two groups will be looked after. Besides, the connection and close co-operation of the adult and juvenile departments is a decided convenience for employers. In England, where some juvenile branches are organized under the school authorities, co-operating with the labor exchanges, and others are organized under the labor exchanges, co-operating with the school system, the latter form of organization has been found to be more effective and satisfactory.

1 (Con't) 18 years old boy of very limited experience may need much more attention than a 16 year old boy with greater working experience.

3. See U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Bulletin No. 192, p.137ff.  
Also Bulletin No. 196, p.26

## Chapter Four.

## PRINCIPLES OF ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OF OFFICE.

## General Principles.

The first principle of success in the management of a public employment office is the application of strictly business principles and methods. It must be realized, first of all, that the office is not in the business of giving charity relief, that its only business is that of bringing employers in need of help and capable workers in need of employment together. In performing this work a public office might do well to ape the best features of highly successful private agencies.<sup>(1)</sup> All appearance of charity, of catering to special classes of workers or employers, or of serving as resorts for sub-standard labor and "down-and-outs" must be scrupulously avoided. A mere suspicion of such things will keep good men away. The public must be made to understand that the office is a business proposition and proposes to place men on the basis of fitness alone. All classes of labor must be dealt with, to be sure, but these classes should be carefully segregated. In applying business principles, the office staff must be aggressive and not be content with the calls for service which come to the office. That is, if a call for help comes for which the office has no applicant, it must go out and find a man; or if there are applications for employment and no jobs open, the office must attempt to find openings. This practice is given much of the credit for the success of the Milwaukee public office.

The second great principle, implied in the foregoing, is that

(1) Shall the service be free? (See footnote - next page).

of service to employers. In general, an office will succeed in proportion as it meets requirements in sending good help to employers. A chief cause for lack of success in public offices to date has been the fact that employers have not been given satisfactory service. Either they have been given no help at all, or it is low grade, and indicates that in most cases the first man to apply for the job at the office was sent to the employer. Obviously, the patronage of employers is the only hope of success, and a public office must therefore strive for efficiency in selecting suitable men for all positions offered.

Note on: Shall the service be free?

Without exception public employment offices in the United States give free service to both employers and employes, though nominal fees are authorized in some municipal offices in the Pacific Coast states. The advisability of charging such a fee, however, is not a settled question. There is still a tendency for free public employment offices to be classed by workmen and employers as charitable agencies, intended to serve only sub-standard labor. A fee would drive this class from the office and attract the better grades of labor. Employers and employes get individual service at an employment office, it may be argued, and should pay for it. The workers placed would be less likely to leave their positions for little or no reason and come back for new jobs. Will not free service tend to destroy the self-reliance of the workers?

The advocates of free service point out that a public office does not give work to any one, but information about work only. Applicants for positions must be "fit" for jobs or the office can do nothing for them. Besides, the welfare of society depends on the best possible distribution of reliable information of this kind, so that the service must and ought to be free. The government performs the same function in maintaining public schools, agricultural reports, geological surveys, etc. In addition, a fee would have to be borne by the unemployed at a time when they are least able to do so. Under a fee system many abuses are possible, such, for example, as are common under private agencies. There is the temptation to fill positions at all hazards in order to get the fee, and the possibility, therefore, of defrauding applicants. There is also the danger of discriminating between applicants and giving the jobs to those who can pay the most in fees. Practical experience in all public offices has shown that there is no danger of the offices being used too much. They are similar to the schools and libraries in this respect in that they require some effort on the part of the patrons in order to get service from them. Employment offices offer only a chance to get work. Furthermore, the quality of applicants of a public office is not low if the office is managed

That the following of these principles will mean success for an employment office is attested by the experience of offices in several cities. Milwaukee, for example, after having an employment office of the usual type for ten years, started a thorough reorganization in 1913. She got rid of politics, adopted the Civil Service for employes, applied business principles of management, and its business increased four fold in the first year. Every year since has seen further increase in applications for employment and for help and in the number placed in positions. <sup>(1)</sup> There is a constant growth in the amount of high class labor handled and the confidence of employers is increasing. The new office is aggressive and uses all the means at its command to place applicants and satisfy employers. Cleveland's public office went through a regeneration at about the same time. The office quit catering to the "down-and-outs" and went over to an efficiency system despite a storm of protest. Almost immediately its business enlarged and it was forced to seek larger quarters. Adequate appropriations were secured and its high standards have forced private agencies to do a clean business or quit. ( Five such agencies were taken over by the public office. During the local employment campaign, during the winter of 1914-15, the office was the leader in the movement and its success won public confidence. England's experience is very similar. The employment bureaus established under the old "Unemployed Workmen Act" came to serve mostly as distress committees and were swamped with unclassifiable, unskilled, shiftless, handicapped, in-continued -- properly. Finally, the cost of keeping records and collecting fees, if paid only after the job is secured, would be considerable and would not, perhaps, be profitable. (Cf. W. M. Leiserson, "Public Employment Offices in Theory and Practice", Amer. Lab. Leg. Rev., v. 4, p. 32 ff.; also First Mass. Report of Free Employment Offices, pp. 18-20.)

(1) See the American Labor Legislation Review, Vol. 4, p. 324.

temperate, starving, semi-employable applicants. When the system was reorganized in 1909 the new exchange did not easily make clear to the public their different, strictly business character, but now the exchanges are recognized as a great, efficient, business organization, just as is the public school system.

#### Freedom from Outside Influences.

As indicated in the preceding sections, impartiality and independence from outside control are cardinal virtues for public employment offices. The necessity for these things is clearly shown by the lack of success of most of the bureaus which are maintained under political control or under the influence of employers or employes. Except in the four states of New York, Wisconsin, Massachusetts, and Ohio, public employment offices are in or out of politics at the pleasure of the governor or his appointees. Some states have made half-hearted attempts to take the offices out of politics. Illinois has put all employes except superintendents and assistant superintendents under the civil service. Minnesota specifies that the superintendents of employment offices must have qualities satisfactory to the Board of Examiners. This Board is political, however, so that the law is meaningless. Most states have made no attempt to remove the offices from politics.

#### Cooperation with Other Offices.

The local employment office should cooperate closely and freely with all other public agencies, municipal, state, and federal in exchanging applications for help and for employment in order to secure workers from other districts which it cannot secure locally and

and to find employment for applicants whom it cannot place locally. At the same time it is helping other offices and is aiding in the wider organization of the labor market. Cooperation should extend to the adoption of uniform systems of records and reports, the use of the same terminology and standards in compiling statistical material, and the exchanging of information and ideas as to successful methods and practices for employment offices. At the present time, cooperation among public offices, even within a state system, is the exception rather than the rule and is the least developed of any feature of public office work, though a most important one. Only seven states require weekly reports to a central office, and only five require regular exchange of reports among the offices. Three states provide for a labor bulletin, but no state law is clear in its provisions as to what information should be published. Each official is left to his own discretion and initiative and, since many of them are not men of business or experience with labor, the information exchanged is of small value. No state provides for the interstate exchange of information, though some cities attempt such cooperation. Even in cities where two or more public offices are located, information is not exchanged or the offices do not use the information obtained.

#### Separation from Relief Work.

In order to attain its greatest usefulness in serving both employers and employees, an employment office must take no account of the need of those applying for employment. The number of a man's dependents, the length of time he has been out of work, etc., should have nothing to do with his chance of securing work through the office, for these things do not have any direct connection with his

industrial capacity or reliability, and these qualities are the ones in which employers are interested. The setting up of the standard of fitness will actually bring more business to the office and enable it to be of greater usefulness to the community in the long run than if it allowed questions of need to influence its work. The office must be a place where the very best workers can be obtained by employers and where employes can feel that they can apply and get work for which they are best fitted. The taint of charity has always been fatal to every public enterprise.

#### Attitude Toward Less Efficient Labor.

Closely connected with the principle of separation from relief work is the corollary that service to casual and sub-standard labor is not the chief concern of an employment office and should be treated as a side issue to the placement of able-bodied and reliable workers. The department for unskilled and handicapped workers should endeavor as far as possible to decasualize casual labor and to develop out of it a body of reliable workers who will be given steady employment. But the office must not become a hang-out for low grade labor or for those who are "looking for work and praying that they will not find it".

#### Decasualization of Casual Labor.

The class of unskilled, low grade, irregularly employed labor in this country is becoming larger all the time. The introduction of highly specialized machinery requiring little or no skill for operation, coupled with the "rush-order" plan of manufacturing that is becoming common in industry, has made for increased irregularity in employment and has augmented the ranks of casual labor. The

New York Commission of Unemployment in 1911 reported that two out of every five wage-earners are obliged to seek work one or more times per year. The seasonal character of industry in some sections further aggravates the problem. As a result there has developed in most communities a shifting class of workers who have no regular employment, are ready to turn a hand to anything, but who are either incapable of or do not desire to obtain steady employment. The employment office, with the cooperation of employers and the support of the public, can remedy this situation to a large extent. It should make itself a clearing house for all casual workers and see to it that all such labor is hired through the office. This makes it possible to concentrate all the employment offered upon the smallest possible number of workers instead of allowing it to be spread over the whole group of under-employed. In this way the office can get acquainted with the "hangers-on" and, by offering them work and following their records, can drive those from industry who will not take and keep steady employment.

This method has been practiced in numerous places in this country and in Europe and the results have been uniformly successful. Cleveland reduced materially its army of casual workers and the result has been beneficial for the whole employment situation.<sup>(1)</sup> Los Angeles, by practicing concentration, has reduced to a comparatively small number those who have been the leeches and parasites. In Liverpool, England, we have the notable example of the Liverpool dock scheme, where a concentration of work was effected successfully among 31,000 dock laborers. Other examples which might be dis-

(1) See: "Experiences in Extending and Improving the Work of a Public Employment Office", by W. F. Hennessy, U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Bulletin 192, p. 109.

cussed were decasualization schemes perfected among the cloth-porters of Manchester and the skilled ship-repairers at Cardiff and Swansea.<sup>(1)</sup>

#### Work for the Handicapped.

The public office should not advertise its work for handicapped persons, for this may cause the office to lose public confidence, but a number of reliable and valuable workers, though handicapped for general occupations, can be placed with employers in specialized tasks and give entire satisfaction. The practice of the office in this work should be to inform the prospective employer of all the facts about the applicant before he is sent. As was indicated before, however, the duty of the office toward the majority of workers -- the able bodied workmen -- precludes much attention to placing handicapped until a special department can be established. At present, in Minneapolis, some placement work for the handicapped is being done by a special worker of the Associated Charities. Her methods are practical and should be followed by an employment office doing the same work. So far the work has been confined to patients of tubercular hospitals and sanatoria; the Salvation Army attends to most other cases. When a patient is about to be discharged, the Associated Charities worker visits or communicates with the former employer and seeks to place the individual back on the force at some work which he can do efficiently.

In carrying out this work, the following plan is used. First a list of the patients in the sanatoria is assured with the dates of their probable discharge. Along with this, information is secured as to their qualifications and the kind of work desired, former em-

(1) See Andrews, "Practical Program, etc., Am. Lab. Leg. Rev., Vol. 5, pp. 173-192.

ployer, age, residence, nationality, family ties, etc. Next, their records are looked up and their references verified. With this information available, openings are secured to turn over to the men when they are discharged. If no permanent jobs are secured, the men are kept busy at odd jobs out of doors. At present an attempt is made to place the men in the park service or other work that is in the open. The Civil Service Board is asked to cooperate in this attempt.

In other cities the public offices are making some effort to place handicapped men. New York, for example, places partially disabled men who are referred to the offices by the Bureau of Work-<sup>(1)</sup>ingmen's Compensation and by others, but has not been able to spare much time or effort for that kind of service. Los Angeles does not refuse to help handicapped workers, but considers such work as<sup>(2)</sup> strictly incidental to its larger sphere.

#### The Placing of Immigrant Labor.

The United States, by its information service, has recognized its responsibility in the proper distribution and placement of the immigrant worker, as he comes to this country handicapped by lack of skill in most cases, with low standards, unfamiliar with our language and our country, with no friends or relatives, without a<sup>(3)</sup> job -- an easy prey to exploitation -- but public employment offices have contributed little to the solution of the problem. In every community where foreign labor is present, as in Minneapolis, the public office should be alert to meet the situation and prevent the aimless and helpless searching for work. It should not wait

(1) See Annual Report of the Industrial Commission, Loc. cit., p.273.

(2) See Third Annual Report of the Public Employment Bureaus of the Los Angeles District, July, 1916, p. 8.

(3) See U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Bulletin No. 192, p.154 ff.

for the alien to find the office -- private agents pursue no such policy -- but must make a vital and immediate contact with him. Before the immigrant leaves his own country he should have knowledge of the public agencies gained from advertisements or articles in his own newspaper describing the offices and their work. After his arrival in this country the contact must be made through interpreters on the office staff. Pains must be taken, of course, in gaining the confidence of the foreigner, for he may have been duped so much by private agents and others that he is suspicious of all offers of assistance. At the present time immigrants are allowed to seek employment without any inquiry as to previous occupation or training. Practically all of them, men and women, go into the ranks of the unskilled and never get out. Skilled tailors have been found working in ditches, an engineer was discovered working as a waiter in a hotel, and many women hire out as scrubwomen when they are skilled needle-workers. <sup>(1)</sup> In another particular case, a Polish masseur with seventeen years experience in hospitals, fashionable sanitariums, and with private physicians, was found working as a day laborer in the metal room of the Deering plant, Chicago. These few instances of mal-adjustment illustrate clearly the need of the same sort of vocational guidance for immigrants as is necessary for juveniles, since they are ignorant of possibilities in their own trades. They must be classified according to the kind of work to which they are suited. Peasant immigrants are usually best suited to ground work, construction labor, woods or farm work,

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(1) See article by Miss Kellor, Nat., Munic. Rev., Vol. 4, p. 71, 1915.

(1) requiring great physical strength and less intelligence. The city immigrant is better adapted to light factory work, hotel or restaurant help, or often has a trade of his own. In sending immigrants out to jobs, they should be given full information as to wages to be received, hours of labor, work conditions and probable duration of the work. Any deductions to be made from his wages must be explained and he should be told to come to the office about any misunderstandings. By cooperating with the Immigration Commissions, evening schools and boarding houses for foreigners, much valuable service can be rendered to immigrant labor.

#### Attitude Toward Labor Disputes.

In order to live up to its standard of impartiality in management, the public employment office must maintain strict neutrality during labor disputes, and must not use its influence to prejudice the conduct of such disputes. The superintendent may act as a neutral intermediary between the employers and the employes, especially when the dispute is due to a misunderstanding on the part of either party, but in most cases it is safer to keep "hands-off". However, it is the duty of the office in all cases to furnish all the information at its command to either party. During (the progress of) a dispute, the office should continue to receive and post all orders for help with full details as to the working conditions, but should make no further effort to secure workers. If applicants ask to be sent out, the office should warn them as to the exact na-

(1) See discussions by Beckerle, U. S. Bureau of Labor, Bul. 192, p. 34 and Leiserson, Am. Lab. Leg. Rev., Vol. 4, p. 329. For the methods used by some public employment offices, see the following: "The Immigrant Worker and the Public Employment Office", by Anne Erickson, Immigrant Protective League, Chicago; U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Bulletin No. 192, pp. 128-133; and, "The Immigrant and the Industrial World", W. F. Hennessey, Commissioner of Employment, Cleveland, loc. cit., pp. 133-137.

ture of the dispute before giving them introduction cards to the employers. In some places it is the practice to stamp across the introduction card "Labor dispute in progress", or "Strike on at this plant". The applicant must then use his own judgment as to whether or not to apply and the office is not responsible for results. This plan is followed in most American offices, and in England and Germany, the system having originated in the last named country. As practiced by these offices, the plan is acceptable to both employers and employes. In England there is some modification of the plan -- elaboration, rather. The law governing the activity of the exchanges during labor disputes provides that either party to a controversy may file a statement of its position, which statement must be given publicity by the superintendent of the exchange and communicated to the other party to the dispute which, in turn, may file a statement. Applicants for positions in establishments affected must be informed of these statements, and then allowed to choose their own course. This is the practice in case of a strike. When a trade dispute is in progress, and the true state of conditions is in doubt, the office enforces two rules framed to safeguard the workers without embarrassing "straight" employers. First, the trade agreements bearing on conditions and wages must be filed for public inspection at the labor exchange. Second, no applicant, refusing to apply by reason of such dispute, or because wages offered are lower than those current in the trade in that locality, shall be disqualified for other openings. <sup>(1)</sup> In a few instances in the United States, public offices attempt to follow

(1) See Lasker: 'The British System of Labor Exchanges, Bul. U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, No. 206.

state laws which declare that the offices must not furnish strike-breakers, but in late years the practice is turning toward that of English offices, with the result of enlarging the usefulness of the office. The fear of partisan use of the public offices in time of strikes or labor disputes has been one of the greatest single elements in delaying the rapid extension of public offices. Some states attempt to guard against this danger by providing that the records of the office must be confidential and that the office cannot discriminate against persons for refusing information. On the whole, however, few complaints have arisen because the public offices send out strike-breakers.<sup>(1)</sup>

#### Shall the Office Advance Transportation?

There is perhaps no more perplexing question in connection with public employment office policies than that of advancing transportation to needy workmen for whom the office has secured work outside the city. There are many desirable and deserving workers who are unable to go to a job because they lack railroad fare, and employers out in the state have a right to the service of an office supported in large part by the state. Clearly, some provision should be made to serve both. Many difficulties, however, lie in the way of an attempt to do so. Unscrupulous men would take advantage of transportation advances to secure funds at the expense of the State or city. The better class of labor would tend to suspect an ele-

(1) In districts where state or municipal offices come into contact with Federal employment work, they find a different attitude in regard to "neutrality". The Federal officials maintain that it is not the province of employment offices to send workers into a district where there are admittedly sufficient workers, where there is no scarcity of labor, but only a disagreement over wages or conditions. See Los Angeles, Third Annual Report, p. 10. This attitude and the one now generally accepted by state and municipal offices must be reconciled and a uniform practice adopted.

ment of charity in the practice and avoid the office. And, as in the case of charging nominal fees, a large amount of clerical labor would be necessary to collect and keep a record of money due the office. Finally, no plan has as yet been devised which will insure the applicant's acceptance of the job when he arrives at his destination.

The Wisconsin plan of checking the applicant's baggage to an employer who will advance transportation and allowing the employer to deduct the amount from wages, has been widely advertised, but it is not by any means fraud-proof and discriminates against the worker who has no baggage. Besides, an employer cannot, under the law, hold a man's baggage if he refuses to go to work, for this would amount to involuntary service. The laborer may claim, and with justice in many cases, that the position was misrepresented. Neither can a worker's wages be assigned as security, for the same reason. If the conditions are objectionable and the applicant refuses to go to work, he cannot be compelled to do so. In Los Angeles, and in some other places, the officials will act for employers who are willing to advance transportation. For the fiscal year July 1, 1915 to July 1, 1916, the office took care of transportation to the amount of almost \$20,000.<sup>(1)</sup> It is in Europe, however, that the problem of transportation has received most attention. In Germany most of the difficulties met in the United States are solved by having government owned railways which give reduced rates to men sent out by the bureaus. In Wartenburg the state railways give a fifty per cent reduction of third class fares to workers going to positions, if the distance is more than 15

(1) See Third Annual Report, p. 39.

(1)  
miles and most of the other states have similar provisions. The employes repay the bureaus after the jobs are secured. In those states where the railroads are not state owned, the class distinctions make it possible to utilize, by agreement with the railroads, a "tag" system of transporting workers at small cost.

In England all the labor exchanges advance fares when jobs have been found outside of the district, if the distance is more than five miles, and employes repay from their wages. The advance is considered as a loan which may be repaid in installments, if necessary, and may be deducted from the worker's wages by the employer. No fares are advanced to vacancies caused by labor disputes affecting the trade, or to vacancies where wages are lower than those current in the trade in the district where the employment is found. The results of the system have been highly satisfactory. In 1912, 96,189 persons took advantage of it, or 12.3 per cent of all persons for whom positions were found; 94.4 per cent of the sums advanced have already been repaid and it is estimated that the loss will be (2) considerably less than two per cent.

These European systems are hardly practicable for use in the United States, where railroads are privately owned and workmen refuse, ordinarily, to ride second class even where it is possible to do so. The lack of a national system of employment offices or of close cooperation among existing state and municipal offices makes it impossible to keep "tab" on those to whom transportation is advanced or to see that "dead-beats" do not repeat the operation in each city. If the congestion of labor becomes noticeable in any

(1) "Employment Offices in Germany", Appendix C, Proceedings of Am. Assn. of Public Employment Offices, U.S. Bul. 192, p.153 ff.

(2) Ibid, p. 22 ff. See also, Lasker, op. cit. loc. cit.

locality, emergency measures can be taken to meet the special situation and workers can be shipped by the car load to localities where they are needed. In such a case the office should send along a member of the staff to keep the men together and see that they go to work. The methods of private agencies in advancing fares are worthy of study in this connection. Until a federal system of employment offices, or a federal organization of those now existing, is put into operation and takes over the entire transportation problem, no adequate solution may be looked for.

#### Attitude Toward Private Agencies.

The desire to protect workers from the mal-practices of private agencies by setting up effective competition was the primary motive for the establishment of public offices. In rare instances, this has been accomplished. In Cleveland some five or six private agencies were forced out of business and in Los Angeles a score or more. The remainder have been, in many cases, forced to raise their standards and conduct the business on a high level. But this is not the true purpose of the public employment bureau and it cannot be justified on such grounds. The real function of public employment offices is the reduction of unemployment through the organization of the labor market. If anything short of this is attempted, the public office becomes merely "another" employment agency and adds to the conditions making for lack of organization. Obviously, then, the public office should seek to obtain a monopoly of the employment business in its locality. If this is not provided for by law, as in a few cities on the Pacific coast, private agencies should be forced to use the public office as a clearing house, by reporting to it daily unfilled positions and unfilled orders for

help. If, however, the public office is forced to compete with private offices, this competition should be in service and the superintendent and office force should be so aggressive and efficient that the office will secure a virtual monopoly anyway.

In practically every state in the union there has been some legislative attempt to regulate or supervise private employment agencies, the laws being designed to correct mal-practices, regulate fees, and provide inspection and reports. There has been almost no attempt, however, to legislate them out of existence. Speaking in this connection, Hon. Chas. P. Neill, former Commissioner of the Bureau of Labor, said: "With proper regulation, private employment agencies are of great service to the public and where free employment offices do not exist may be regarded as a necessity. It is probable that in discussions relating to private employment agencies too much emphasis has been put upon the evil practices of unprincipled agents and too little upon the service rendered by the properly conducted bureaus. Until public employment agencies have been developed to a far greater usefulness than at present and until much more money has been appropriated for their extension and support, the private agency will continue to feel a need and to charge for its services. To legislate such offices out of existence as has been sometimes proposed would be disastrous and to hope to drive them out of business by the competition of free public offices is for the present at least unwarranted".<sup>(1)</sup>

There is no uniform practice among the various states in regard to the regulation and supervision of private agencies. The

(1) Bulletin, U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, No. 109, "Statistics of Unemployment and the Work of Employment Offices", F. B. Sargent.

best results seem to have been obtained by those states which put this power in the hands of the same authorities who control the public offices. Two methods of enforcing the laws are in use: enforcement by state officials, such as industrial commissions or state superintendents of public employment offices, and enforcement in their respective cities by the local superintendents of public offices. From the meagre reports and data published, it is impossible to say which method is superior. Because of the possibility of local antagonisms it seems probable that the first plan should be the better. In either case, however, the aim should be to enforce cooperation thru the organization of the labor market and the use of clearing house methods. This can be accomplished by making appropriate administrative rules for private agencies, prescribing forms for records uniform with those used in the public office, and publishing information of the work of private agencies together with that of the public office.<sup>(1)</sup>

#### Selection of Applicants for Positions.

Success in selecting satisfactory workers to send to employers will depend primarily upon the ability of the placement secretaries and their knowledge of the needs of the individual employers. As has been noted, they should be familiar, as far as possible, with the exact conditions in the places of work, should know the trade requirements for the various positions, and should be personally acquainted with the employers or with the foremen who engage the help. (These standards should be set for the purpose both of assuring the employer the type of man wanted and of guarding employes against positions which will be unsatisfactory.)

(1) Cf. Andrews, Article in Am. Labor Leg. Rev., vol. 5, p. 180.

Finally, the placement officials must be able to select men whose qualifications fit them for the positions offered.

In selecting men or in serving employers, there must be no partiality shown and every application must be treated strictly on its merits. The respect of both employers and employes will best be gained and conserved by absolute adherence to the principle of fitting the man to the job. Among the tests of fitness which may be employed are: the worker's record, references from previous employers, confidential reports from employers, and the information given on the applicant's registration card. <sup>(1)</sup> After the office has once placed a man, the record kept on his registration card will show his worth and reliability. References may be required of skilled applicants if employers so request. In regard to the employer's confidential report there is some doubt. Such a report on a man's fitness while still employed would enable the office to check up its work and to get references before possible disagreements may arise which would make the employer hostile to the worker. On the other hand, the employer might object to making such a report lest it be used to take a good man away from him.

The selection of men in accordance with trade requirements in a city of such diversified industry as Minneapolis is a difficult task and adequate performance of it will require long and wide experience. Among skilled workers, for example, the specialization and diversification is almost unlimited. A textile machinery fitter might be quite unable to do machine-tool, or steam engine fitting -- there are several kinds of fitters all of the same trade name. In engineering there are dozens of different kinds of ex-

(1) See Andrews: "Practical Program for Prevention of Unemployment", Am. Lab. Leg. Rev., p. 178, vol. 5.

perience; in automobile manufacturing there are hundreds. An employment office shouldn't send a house painter when a machinery painter is wanted, nor a man to handle egg cases in a warehouse who is used to handling iron girders. On the other side, men looking for work will say anything -- profess any kind of experience -- to get a job and placement clerks must be familiar enough with the trades to check up on such men. To aid the office staff in placing men accurately, it is possible to draw up an employment chart of the various trades and occupations with the technical terms applied to the different tasks and to the men who perform them. This chart can be used by the placement clerk in interviewing applicants and can also be placed in the hands of employers so that they can requisition help in the same terms and avoid misunderstandings. Such a chart, of course, would have to be built up slowly and based on experience. In Minneapolis industry is not so highly specialized as in other cities, as in Detroit, for example, and such a chart would be hard to work out. In Detroit the Board of Commerce has perfected a chart of about 300 divisions, the greater part of them having to do with the automobile and other machine making industries. The need for some such scheme as this in any city must be determined by the superintendent of the public employment office.

The principle of selection which aims to place a man into the position for which he is exactly fitted must be modified, however, in actual practice. There is not always a large group of capable men to pick from for every position, nor can an applicant always afford to wait until a position for which he is exactly suited becomes vacant. If, on the one hand, it must be remembered that a

man is not necessarily suitable for a job merely because he can do the work required in a fairly satisfactory manner, it must also be considered, on the other hand, that it is frequently necessary for a man to enter some other trade than his own for the time being and wait for work to open up in his line. Therefore, placement clerks must know what jobs a man can handle who is versed in a particular trade -- that is, in what industries there is considerable transferability of training. Finally, an applicant's age and capacity must be taken into account. If he is capable of doing or learning to do better and more remunerative work, he should be put into a job that will develop his capabilities. "The man should not be sacrificed to the job nor the job to the man".

#### Discriminations.

In order to select applicants properly, the employment office must make certain discriminations. These should be based, however, wholly upon the principle of fitness already established and must be rigidly adhered to. In every case such discrimination should be made frankly and openly and the reasons given. Any tendency to deception will instantly arouse suspicion and antagonism. Here the office records will be of great service in establishing proof of unreliability and unfitness or, in the case of employers, of misrepresentation and unfairness of treatment. There should be no discrimination against a worker who refuses a position offered him outside his own trade or where the wages or conditions are below the standard of the locality in which the position is offered, nor against an employer who refuses a worker sent him because he is unfit for the job. True discrimination will secure

the confidence of both parties. In every case the office should send a man who will make good, or else send none. Many of the public offices now in existence are failing to live up to their possibilities because they do not exercise proper discrimination, but give preference to "need", length of time out of work, number of dependents, etc.

In actual practice there are many secondary discriminations practiced by various offices and for various reasons. Though fitness alone is reported as the basis of placement in a majority of offices, yet, when applicants are of equal fitness, preferences are given on the basis of other tests. In Chicago, fitness being equal, priority of application and "references" are determining factors; in Massachusetts, fitness being equal, residents of the state are given preference, and length of residence is considered; in Wisconsin, married men, if equally fit, are preferred to single men; in Los Angeles, preference is shown, where possible, to heads of families and to individuals who else may become dependent upon charity, but the first consideration is always fitness, and, if unfit, need or family connections are of no avail. There are offices, however, where such standards are set as "residents with families, others in alphabetical rotation", (Kansas City); "for common labor, married men given preference", (Tacoma, Wash.); "need of employment, fitness", (Missouri). In Germany, other things being equal, married men are given preference, but the practice of sending the best man who happens to be present in the office when the call comes is also reported. This latter practice is also followed, to some extent, in England and in the public offices of New York. It is also extensively practised in numerous other state of-

ices, particularly in dealing with common labor, and this is the kind that predominates. The New York offices consider rapidity in filling an employer's order as a virtue of such importance as to make it a motto, though they recognize that rush orders do not ordinarily call for high class men, and, if they did, could hardly be filled from the crowd that hangs around an employment office. The practice of filling an order from persons on the floor at the time makes it necessary for a man, if he wishes to stand any chance of getting a job, to waste hours and days at the employment office. When numbers of men do the same thing, the office takes on, especially at certain hours of the day, the appearance of a mob, and, even at other times, the amount of loafing in the office should prove highly objectionable. Unless the German system of providing amusement, good reading, cheap lunches, and other conveniences for the applicants is established, <sup>(1)</sup> it is not the best policy to put a premium on loafing at the employment office. It is true that employers desire and appreciate quick service, but the office should be able to establish quick connection with applicants who are suitable by telephone or messenger or by mail. It is perhaps desirable to have the unemployed applicant call frequently at the office to inquire for work - even as often as once a day - but these inquiries should be made at stated hours and, if there is no job available, the applicant should be made to feel free to absent himself from the office for the rest of the day without feeling that he may be losing chances to secure a job by doing so.

(1) See article on "Labor Exchanges in Germany", by Elmer Roberts, Scribners, June 1912, pp. 111-116.

## CHAPTER FIVE

REGISTRATION OF EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES--  
RECORD FORMS, Etc.

For the purpose of making the public employment office the clearing house of labor and of gathering statistics to solve the problem of unemployment, it will be necessary for the public office and for work to register every applicant for help, whether able, in every case, to find employment or to fill the position offered.<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of such registrations, the office should use a card system of records. Such a system is clearly the best for employment offices, since the records must constantly be referred to and revised. Most of the public offices in the United States and Europe have adopted the card system in some form. The bookkeeping is with men and jobs, not money, and this fact makes it necessary to use a loose-leaf system, as well as most convenient.

The purpose of the record system, with its collected information about men and jobs, is to insure the best possible service to all concerned. Orders should be filled with the best men available and the available positions should be given to the men most fit. In this way the employer is protected against the worker who will not "stick", who is unreliable, or whose work is unsatisfactory; and the employe is protected against the unfair employer, or the one who misrepresents wages or conditions of work.<sup>2</sup> Records of this kind are essential, moreover, to show the actual results obtained by the office. An office cannot be successfully conducted in ignorance

<sup>1</sup> For a discussion of the problems involved, see later, Chapter Six.

<sup>2</sup> The keeping of records for statistical purposes is discussed in the section on Statistics, Chapter Six.

of the number of positions filled or of the records of the persons for whom it has secured positions. The whole business of securing employment is dependent in large part upon the accuracy of the records kept, for the proper selection of applicants is possible only with a careful system of registration and of "checking up."<sup>1</sup> Again, in so far as the value of the public office is dependent upon its activities in decasualising labor and weeding out the inefficient, accurate records respecting the individuals with whom the office does business is absolutely indispensable.

As a rule the records of public employment offices have been of little value, from whence arises the difficulty and failure in most cases to make proper selections of applicants. In many offices the information taken from employers and employes is slipshod and disregarded as of little importance. The further fact that, though the card system is in general use, the records kept are not uniform, makes it almost impossible to check up on the work of one office by comparing its records with those of another.

#### Character of the Record System

A public office should not, initially, be burdened by a too elaborate system of records lest it spend its energies too much in this direction. While it is true that a general foundation should be laid and adhered to--in conformity, so far as possible, with the general practice in the best public offices--yet the development and elaboration of the system should go hand in hand with the growing needs of the office. The available clerical help will be, of course, the actual determinant of the physical limits of the system. The

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Leiserson, "Public Employment Offices in Theory and in Practice" American Labor Legislation Review, Vol. 4, p. 324 ff.

records kept must be exact, comprehensive and systematised. This means, in the words of Commissioner Houk, that "an office should not keep its records in such shape that neither the manager of the employment office nor anyone else can discover exactly what its services to the community have been. The system of records must be exact in every detail, otherwise it misses its point and a business enterprise degenerates into a disorganised, haphazard effort which fails of its essential purpose."<sup>1</sup> It should be possible from the records to show proper authorities and the general public what justification there is for the establishment and maintenance of the office.

The most important part of the record system is the employe's registry card, since it contains the information upon which the office relies principally in placing each man properly. In make-up it should be simple, though comprehensive, and should ask a minimum of questions of the applicant. Workers will not stand too much questioning and have a great dislike and some suspicion of much scrutiny, questions, and the red-tape of registration.<sup>2</sup> Perceiving little or no connection between some of the questions and the immediate business of getting a job, many applicants are apt to refuse to answer, to evade questions, or to falsify.<sup>3</sup> All this is due, of course, to a misunderstanding of the purpose of the questioning and can be remedied by the frankness and friendly spirit of the registration clerk.

<sup>1</sup> W.F.Houk, "The Wrong Way to Conduct a System of Employment Offices," loc. cit., p. 48-50.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Bulletin, International Association on Unemployment, 1913, page 815 ff.

<sup>3</sup> The age question is the most objectionable. In some trades there is so much speeding up that only young men are able to keep the pace and old men need not apply. In such cases the chance of getting employment may be reduced by giving one's age. As with the other information, the age of the applicant must be kept confidential, but some employers specify age limits and the office must comply. Most employers, however, are interested primarily in getting men who can do the work and handle the tools properly, and age is a very secondary consideration.

The applicant must not get the notion that he is being quizzed about personal matters. The information given is to be treated as confidential, to be used only by the office clerks in selecting applicants. Further, answers to all questions should not be required, though, in most cases it should be encouraged as insuring better and more prompt placement. In many cases, of course, all the questions will not apply and the clerks must learn to use judgement in this matter. They must not, however, allow registration rules to become lax and go to the other extreme of securing too little information about the unemployed. More information needs to be secured about skilled workers than about common labor; applicants for clerical positions should furnish more detailed information than those wishing factory positions. If separate registration cards are not provided for the various general classes, the clerks must be able to secure the needed information, and only that needed, without bothering the applicant with needless questions.

The process of registration consists first in having the applicant sign his name on the blank. This secures the correct spelling of the name and implies an obligation on his part to answer all the questions truthfully. In case of well educated applicants, they may be permitted to fill out the entire card. The information which should be asked for on the card is not at present standardised.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The records provided for in this chapter conform closely to those recommended in the preliminary report of the Committee on Standards of the American Association of Public Employment Offices at its meeting in Detroit, July 1915. (See Proceedings, loc. cit. pp. 118-20) At the next annual meeting, held in Buffalo at year later, a standing committee for the purpose of drawing up a system of uniform records and formulating standard definitions of terms and methods of work which can be used in all the offices throughout the country, was appointed. This committee is composed of Royal Meeker, Commissioner of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Chairman; Chas. F. Gettemy, Director, Bureau of Statistics, Massachusetts; ; H.J.Beckerle, superintendent, Public Employment Office, Milwaukee; C.H.Mayhugh, superintendent, Cleveland City, State Public Employment Office: and Luke D.  
(continued on next page)

In general, however, it should cover two kinds of questions: those having to do directly with the applicant's industrial capacity, and, those to be used more for statistical purposes. In the first division, information should probably be secured on the following points: address; telephone; age; residing at home or boarding out; employment desired; second choice; experience or industrial history; terms desired; willingness to go outside the city; nationality; education; trade unionist; personality. The second group will comprise such information as: Married or single; number of dependents; alien or citizen; length of residence in the country, in the state, and in the city; religion; length of time out of work; reasons for unemployment (using the standards of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics). In addition to the information to be recorded about the applicant, there must be room in the card for dates of application and the signature of the clerk. On the reverse side, also, there should be space provided for reference to previous employers and for a record of the places to which the applicant is sent, with dates, results, and remarks. A system of symbols may be worked out for use in recording results, such as that suggested for the Women's Department, provided that it is rigidly adhered to. It is possible that a system of abbreviations would be better than other symbols. The system in use at Boston enables the office at any time to tell the amount of help it is furnishing to any employer, the number of times it has referred an applicant to a position, and how often he secured work.

Cross files of applicants' registration cards may be arranged

McCoy, secretary, Illinois Bureau of Labor Statistics. (See Monthly Review of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Sept. 1916) These are among the ablest men now connected with employment office work and their report at the next annual meeting will be the most important thing on which the Association will have to act. Until that report is made, it is hardly worth while to set up a system of records and it will not be attempted in this chapter. A general outline is all that will be presented.

according to occupations, a separate card being made out for each occupation in which the applicant has skill or experience. These cards should then be filed, by occupations, for ready reference. This is the Up-to-the-Minute Card in use by some offices.

In the case of skilled workmen it is highly necessary and important that specialised classifications and records be kept. Employers insist upon experienced and fully capable men in specialised operations. For example, in the automobile industry, the employer will not want a band-sawyer when a door-hanger is needed. It is important, too, that the details of a man's accomplishments be recorded. That is, in the case of a painter: can he do decorating, or paper-hanging? In the case of a machinist: is he an expert on a milling machine? can he run a turret lathe, etc.? In the case of a farm hand: has he knowledge of grain farming? dairy farming? truck farming? All of a man's abilities, the length of experience in each, must be listed in detail, provided he is willing to take work in any one of the lines for which he is qualified. Various and often extremely peculiar combinations of skill are asked for by an employer and offices are often able to send just the man needed by having complete information of the sort here advocated.

The question of requiring references of applicants for employment is one of the many still in dispute among even the best offices. Some take the position that, besides requiring extra labor in the office, requiring references would put the office in the position of guaranteeing the quality of the labor sent out. Besides, references are frequently unreliable. Such offices do not require references, though they accept them when offered.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, many offices maintain that references are necessary to insure efficiency

<sup>1</sup> Cf. First Annual Report, Massachusetts Free Employment Offices, p. 20

in placement and retain the respect of employers. From the experience of many offices it appears that no hard and fast rule can be laid down. It would seem that confidential reports from employers might be used successfully, after the office has once placed a man. In other cases there can be no objection to learning the names of previous employers. It will be found necessary, also, to investigate an applicant's record at the request of the employer. As to other rules, they must be formulated on the basis of experience and judgment must be used in enforcing them, for no two cases will be alike. Most reliance should, in all cases, be placed upon the results of the personal interview with the applicant by the expert placement secretary. As a result of such an interview an investigation will often be made upon the initiation of the interviewer.

#### Employers' Orders for Help

As stated before, all bona fide orders for help should be recorded whether the office is able to fill them or not. The office should not record, however, the number of workers called for in every case, but only the number expected or required. Employers are often very indefinite in their requisitions for help, as to time limits and the number of workers they need. In the latter case more workers may be sent than will be hired, so that the employer may make a selection, but only the number hired should be recorded. A general rule which may be applied is as follows: "If, from anything that the office may say or do, the employer expects service from it, an order should be recorded. If, from anything that has been said by the office, the employer does not expect service, then a memorandum will suffice and no record need be made."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Proceedings, Amer. Assn. of Public Employment offices, loc. cit., p. 120.

The card system record of the employer's order should be as simple as possible, yet contain the necessary information by which the secretary selecting the applicant may know what is expected of office, and at the same time have a record, which is continuous for further use, showing transactions between the office and the employer.<sup>1</sup> The employers may be allowed to register calls for help in person, by mail, or over the telephone. In case of regular and large orders for help from employers, the office may set aside a special room for their use in the interviewing of applicants.

The information asked for on the Employer's Registration Card is only such as is needed in order to select suitable help. (Information for other purposes is to be secured by the solicitors and recorded on another card.) On the registration card such information as the following should be recorded: Firm name, address and telephone; person giving the order; person to be seen by applicant; kind of work; number wanted; wages, hours, and probable duration of the employment; preferences as to age, nationality, etc.; special qualifications desired; how long place will be held open; will the employer pay transportation if necessary; any strike or other labor dispute in progress. To this should be added the date and hour of receipt, initials of the clerk, the name of the person sent, and the result. Obviously all the questions implied in the above will not be asked in every case, such as the ones involving transportation and labor disputes. As in the case of employes, the person concerned should not be needlessly irritated by useless questioning. Symbols or abbreviations can be used on the employer's card, also, to record

<sup>1</sup> Cf. A Record System for Public Employment Offices--Discussion, by Sears, Leiserson, and others. Proceedings, Amer. Assn. of Public Employment Offices, 1922, pp. 28-31.

results--to indicate whether or not the applicant called on the employer as agreed; whether or not he was hired and reported for work, as agreed, etc.

The question of investigating employers to whom applicants are sent has not been considered important by public employment offices except in the case of women and juveniles. In these instances some offices are seeking as far as possible to protect the interests of the workers. In the men's departments the rule has been that the office should not attempt to investigate an employer except in case of doubts as to conditions of labor and good faith on his part. The general business reputation, facts secured by questioning employes, and the record of treatment of the men sent out by the office, must be relied upon for information about the employer, unless and until the office is able to ascertain the facts by personal visits to the plant in the work of solicitation.

If the clerical force of the office permits it, an Employer's Ledger Card, or office directory and information card, should be kept in addition to the Order Card. This should serve as a permanent record of the classes of help applied for by the employer and a cumulative record of the services rendered him. The information called for should include: employer's number, to "tie it to the other records; firm name, address, and telephone; business or industry; who hires help; and the record of services, with dates, number wanted, number hired, kind of work, and the persons sent. This form can be dispensed with if the Order Cards are filed as permanent records.

#### Card of Introduction

This card must exist in some form or other in order to give definite instructions to the applicant for work and direct him

properly. It should contain the name and address of the person to whom the applicant is to apply and the time and place of application. The regular postal card, addressed to the employment office, serves the purpose best and makes the card ready for mailing when the person has applied and turned the card in to the employer. The card should contain a request for the employer to indicate on it whether or not the applicant is hired and mail it back to the office. This may be modified to the extent of requiring the applicant to return the card if he is not hired or mail it back to the office. The chief value of the Introduction Card is that, when returned to the office, it serves as verification of the results of the "send out". In case it is not returned, verification must be made in some other way. A Verification Card may be used for this purpose, designed to record how the results were verified, whether by mail, telephone, or personal visit. This form is not essential, but its use is highly recommended by the offices in which it has been tried.<sup>1</sup> Boston has found it very useful and it has been adopted by the New York system.

The six record forms thus described constitute a simple and comprehensible system for a public employment office. If necessary, the Up-to-the-minute<sup>2</sup> card, the Verification Card, and the Employer's Ledger cards may be dispensed with, but the remaining forms constitute an indispensable nucleus to the system. From these three forms, however, the record system may be elaborately enlarged. By this system, the superintendent or any other person can find at a moment's notice: who was sent to the employer in question, the date, whether he was engaged or not; also, where any employe was sent and when, and whether he was engaged or not, etc. The record of any worker or the service rendered to any employer can be read at a glance.

<sup>1</sup> See: Record System for Public Employment Offices, Discussion, 1922, p. 22.

### Business Report Form

From the record cards each day of persons who have applied for help, of workers who have applied for employment, and from Introduction cards which have been returned, the office statistician should at the close of each day's business make up a daily report and place it in the hands of the superintendent and placement clerks before the office opens for business next day. On a special blank provided for the purpose, containing four columns, there should be recorded, by occupation in each case: the number of applicants for work; the number of applications for help; the number referred to positions; and, the number of positions secured. Casual or temporary jobs should be listed separately at the bottom of the report. Here should appear every kind of work, skilled or unskilled, which lasts less than a month. Both daily and cumulative totals may well be included in the daily report. The form used for the report should contain, as implied, a printed list of all the industries and occupations represented in the city, as far as possible, classified according to the United States Census method. The daily business report, prepared in this way, is indispensable to the successful operation of every public office and, in a state system, is the basis of all cooperation among the various offices. From the daily reports a monthly summary is compiled. The form, content, and uses of this report will be discussed later.

### Routine of Registration and Record System

Until the committee on standards of the American Association of Public Employment Offices makes recommendations for a uniform system of records and filing practices, the cards used, their size, shape, and the methods of filing, must be matters of individual

choice and judgement on the part of the employment office superintendents, and the practice in each instance will be determined largely by considerations of expediency. The Boston office has evolved the most elaborate system now in use in this country, while the Milwaukee office, which is considered just as efficient though operating on a smaller scale, uses the simpler system compatible with successful operation. Cleveland combined the best in these two systems in formulating her own, while New York, seeking to find the best possible system, studied the records used in employment offices in both the United States and Europe, taking the best from each, combining them into a comprehensive system under the direction of record and filing experts from the biggest establishments in New York.

The public employment office should early establish and maintain definite hours for the registration of various classes of workers, and it may also be necessary to set apart certain hours when employers may apply for particular kinds of help. The practice will depend, of course, upon the kinds of labor handled. Employers may be educated to apply in the afternoons for workers who are to be sent them next morning. The office can then give the applicants introduction cards in the evening and they can go directly to the plants next morning. When a good deal of common labor is handled, the office must open early. For other classes of applicants different hours should be set, as experience shall dictate, and the workers made to feel perfectly free in absenting themselves from the office at all other times. If no introduction cards for jobs are given out at other times, these regulations will not be hard to enforce. Some such plan as this is in use in the offices at Boston, Chicago, Milwaukee, Cleveland, and the five offices in New York State.

During registration hours applicants for employment should be required to stand in line and take their turns at the registration desk. The mob appearance must never be permitted; when the men are not in line, they must be seated in the room. During rush hours there should be two clerks in charge of registration. The first of these should secure only general information in regard to the applicant, such as: length of residence in the city; whether he has ever been to the office before and registered, etc. When positions are scarce it may be necessary to discriminate against newcomers and in favor of residents, but all should be permitted to register. If an applicant has been registered before and secured a position, the reason for his return must be ascertained and accepted before he is passed. In a city where there is a large foreign element, the first interviewer may well be the interpreter.<sup>1</sup>

The second interview is carried on by the expert placement secretary, who elicits all the information necessary for the proper placement of the individual. If a position is open in his line, he is given an Introduction Card to the employer; if not, he may be given an Identification Card, bearing his name and the number of his registration. This must be presented at the office regularly as long as the applicant is unemployed.

From the information on the registration card, Up-to-the-minute cards should be made for each occupation in which the applicant has skill or experience. These should be filed by occupation, alphabetically, and "tied" to the registration card by number. The registration cards should then be filed either numerically or alphabetically.

#### Handling the Employer's Order

When an order for help is received from an employer for the

<sup>1</sup> The Milwaukee office boasts that its force speaks eighteen languages.

first time, the information required on the registry card is secured and recorded. If the employer is a regular patron, it is necessary only to make a record of the number of men wanted and the kind. All the information on this card is then transferred to the Ledger or Record card. The Clerk then looks up the names of applicants under the occupation or kind of work called for and then examines the qualifications of the men listed there by reference to their registration cards. If necessary, the men may be called in again and personally interviewed. To the ones selected Introduction Cards are given and they are sent to the employer. The Order Card and the registration cards of the men sent are then attached and kept so within reasonable limits to learn the results. If the men are hired, the signed introduction cards should reach the office by return mail. If not, the results must be learned in other ways, but is recorded both on the Order Card and the employe's record. The transactions of each day are sent to the statistician, and then the cards are filed as before.

An application for employment should be good for one week, only, unless renewed. That is, the applicant must present himself with his Identification Card at the office at least once each week while he is unemployed, or else renew his registration by telephone or mail. If he fails to do so, he should be considered employed or "out of town." His card may be left on file for thirty days before being removed to the dead file. During that time the individual may register without filling out a new card. If he has worked during that time, or if he comes in after thirty days have elapsed, his renewal should be counted as a new registration.

Practice in regard to the length of time for which registration is good varies all the way from one week to two years, the former

being practiced in England and the latter by the Boston office.<sup>1</sup> In most offices in the United States the practice varies from one to six months, though in one case the only limit is "until a position is secured." Municipal offices seem to prefer periods of less than one month. The system here advocated has the merit of keeping the applicant actively cooperating with the office in its efforts to place him, and makes the nearest possible approach, perhaps, to securing an index of unemployment, so far as an employment office is able to do so. It should prevent workers from working one, two, or three weeks in a month and then making representations to the office that they have been unemployed all that time, and it should discourage double registration. In other words, the benefits of the weekly renewal and the month time limit are both secured.

An employment office must keep track of applicants having special qualifications and of all those whose connection with the office in any way is irregular, such as out of town applicants. If the number is large, it may be well to have a special file to care for them. It would be well if this file could be in the hands of a single individual who should have a prodigious memory for facts of the kind contained. Placements of persons with unusual combinations of abilities are rare and difficult to execute, but furnish an opportunity for service that will give the office wide popular respect for efficiency. In the last analysis, filing systems are only aids to memory and the best service can be given to employers with some-

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<sup>1</sup> In England, in statistics of jobs filled, the number of registrations includes fresh registrations of people formerly on the register, but does not include renewals of current registrations. The number of separate registrations is somewhat lower. In Boston, the active file consists of registrations of the current year and two years previous. If an applicant comes into the office any time within two years from the date he was last sent to a position, his card can be found there.

what unusual demands or to individuals with peculiar combinations of skill, if there can be in the office an employe who is able to bear their needs and the available material in mind, to a considerable extent. It is said that much of the efficiency of the Registrar's Office at Harvard University is due to the presence of such an individual.

#### Penalties for Non-conformance to Rules

It has been found necessary in most employment offices to prescribe rules to govern the relations of the office to the applicants for work and employers who patronise the office, in order that its privileges may not be abused. Both classes must be forced to keep faith with the office. An employe, accepting a card of introduction, thereby agrees to see the employer and apply for the position. If he fails to do so, without good reason, he should be debarred the privileges of the office for thirty days.<sup>1</sup> If an employe, having seen the employer and secured the position, fails to report for work and offers no valid excuse, the penalty should be lengthened to sixty days. If the system is adopted whereby the applicant becomes responsible for the return of the introduction card in case he is not hired, his failure to do so should incur the penalty imposed in the first case. Other penalties may be prescribed for such practices as "double registration", the giving of false information at any time, and in such other cases as the superintendent may deem wise. It is true that in some cases reports of employers and employes will conflict--e.g., the employe may report that he did not accept the position in question. If the facts in such cases cannot be ascer-

<sup>1</sup> Boston and Milwaukee have applied such rules successfully and the penalties imposed in most cases are sixty days or more.

tained, the decision must rest with the placement secretary or the superintendent. The office must not give the impression that, because it has sent an individual to a job, he must accept. If he does not, however, he must give a plausible reason. Penalties on employers will be imposed for misrepresenting conditions and giving false information of any sort. The possibilities here are so varied that no set rules may be laid down, perhaps, and the matter must rest with the superintendent.

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Note on English Registration Practices. The British offices permit registration by mail and the privilege is widely used. Upon registration each applicant receives a Registration Post Card, franked and addressed to the Labour Exchange. He must mail this to the office in case he secures work by his own efforts. An individual may register at as many exchanges as he wishes, and he may register while employed. Employers are supplied with post cards, for free transmission, on which they may make their requisitions for help. Some employers who agree to hire all their help through the labour exchange are given blue enamel plates for exhibition on their gates or at their establishments announcing the fact that no applications are directly received-- that workers must go to the Exchange. Each Exchange provides a special room where employers may interview applicants. In selecting applicants, the exchanges have no regard for length of time out of employment, length of registration, local residence, conjugal condition, financial stress, or any other matter except fitness for the job.

## CHAPTER SIX

## METHODS OF PUBLICITY--PUBLIC REPORTS

Publicity work of public employment offices has the three-fold purpose of bringing the unemployed to the office where they may learn of opportunities for employment, informing employers of the work of the office and securing their patronage, and informing the general public of the activities of the office in order to secure public interest and support.

For the unemployed patrons of the employment office, the most useful device in giving information of opportunities for work is the bulletin board. A large blackboard should occupy a prominent place on the wall of each waiting room upon which the calls for various kinds of workers can be placed. It is not intended that these bulletins should give complete information about the positions offered but just enough to get the applicants to inquire for further information. These notices should be kept up to the minute. Outside bulletins should probably not be used, for they encourage loitering and loafing around the building and this appearance should be avoided. The use of bulletin boards is open to some objection. If the unemployed do not see positions listed that they can fill, they are likely to leave the office without registering. Also, some applicants, seeing certain positions listed, will claim that they can do the work and may get sent out to jobs that they cannot fill; or, since positions are not fully described in the bulletins, men may go away under misapprehensions as to their lack of fitness when they really are fit. These problems must be met by the superintendent and the office practice fixed so as to minimize the possible evils. Perfect frankness to employes must, however, be the rule,

even though some may misrepresent their fitness in the hope of getting a "send-out."

Unemployed workers who do not know of or do not frequent the public employment office must be stimulated to do so by posting bulletins of opportunities in public places over the city. This is a means of advertising the office and also of giving persons <sup>a chance</sup> to learn of opportunities for employment without the expense or inconvenience of a trip to the office. These bulletins must be kept fresh and new. "Stale" bulletins beget lack of confidence in the office. The upper portion of the bulletin may contain general advertising as to the services of the office. This is the practice in New York. In addition to these methods, unemployed workers who are registered at the office should receive private advices of openings by way of the telephone, mail, or messenger service. When a call comes for help for which a registered applicant is fit, the office should get in touch with the individual immediately. In Milwaukee a post card is sent to the applicant with the printed message: "If still out of work, please call at this office. Indianapolis and Chicago use cards of a similar character.

#### Securing the Patronage of Employers

The chief method, both of informing employers of the existence and work of the employment office, and in securing their patronage, is that of personal solicitation. It gives the superintendent and his staff a chance to become familiar with the needs of employers and is necessary in order to make sure that the true function of the office is understood. Perfunctory circulars or business cards will not do the work, for they are thrown in to the waste-baskets without being read. Public offices are new to employers--at least, efficient ones are--and are not ordinarily patronised by them.

Besides, the best private agencies do a great deal of personal solicitation and employ keen experts for the work. Public offices must meet this competition. Finally, the personal contact of employer and office staff enables the office to profit by suggestions and criticisms by employers.

There are persons of authority, however, who do not believe personal solicitation should be used by the public office. They argue that it is unnecessary if the office gives good service, that it is not best to enter into competition with private agencies, and that it is better to concentrate attention upon giving good service. The objections given are those upon which the Boston office has hitherto based its policy. It will be agreed, perhaps, by all authorities, that personal solicitation is useless unless the office gives good service, but it does not follow that it is unnecessary when the office does give good service. There are indications in later reports of the Boston office that its policy is changing. The stand against personal solicitation has been taken largely because the office did not wish to stoop to the level of competing with private agencies. Recently the Director of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, who has supervision over all offices in the state wrote as follows: "We do not solicit the patronage of employers by means of personal canvass, either periodically or systematically, chiefly for the reason that our appropriations have not been sufficient to permit this to be done, though we have occasionally done so in slack times by sending out the employes of the office."

In all the other offices, however, which have attained a large measure of success, personal solicitation is an important part of the work. Mr. Flinn, Superintendent of the Brooklyn, N.Y.,

office, found personal solicitation very helpful even in times when employers had hundreds waiting at their gates for a chance to work. An order for help in response to such an appeal is often given more as a challenge than from any other motive, but, if properly filled, gains a steady patron. In Milwaukee, Cleveland, Tacoma, Louisville, and East St. Louis, among other places, the superintendents give a good deal of time to personal canvassing, in addition to other devices, but only in Chicago and New York is this work specialised to the extent of employing special solicitors who have no other connection with the office. The superintendent in East St. Louis also works through the members of social and civic bodies, who are asked to promote the use of the office through influencing employers and friends to support its work. Newspaper publicity also took the form of publishing stories and distributing facts about the men wanting jobs. The New York offices require all employees to spend a part of their time in visiting the various establishments employing large numbers of laborers for the purpose of accumulating information as to the requirements of the industries, and of getting the support of the employers. In most public offices other than those named very little solicitation is done and none in a systematic way. The office force usually sits around and waits for applications for help to come.

#### Methods of Personal Solicitation

There are several ways by which the attention of employers can be called personally to the willingness and capacity of the public office to serve them. Besides the visit of the solicitor at the place of business, telephone calls and personal letters are effective. Post cards notifying employers that the office is prepared to fill orders for the particular kind of help he uses most some-

times get the business. Most of all, perhaps, the office should encourage the employers to call at the office and investigate its work or come there to interview applicants for positions in his plant.

### Qualifications of Solicitors

Superintendents who do personal solicitation or special officers appointed for that purpose should have aggressive personalities and the mixing qualities of the expert commercial salesman. They should be well posted on industrial conditions and important local occupations, and should become familiar with employers' needs and preferences. The need for these qualifications probably makes it impossible for the ordinary office to make much use of its clerks as solicitors during vacant hours. In the case of Minneapolis, the superintendent, having no routine duties, according to the plan outlined, could give a large portion of his time to solicitation. The Assistant superintendent, also, would have several hours free each week for such work. The qualifications of these two officials would be well up to the standards set for solicitors. On the other hand, the sending of the other office employes to visit industrial plants to acquaint themselves with the needs of employers would amount to indirect solicitation and would give them useful training as well as useful knowledge. Until the work of the employment office becomes so large and complex that branch offices have to be established, which would require most of the time of the superintendent in supervision, most of the solicitation would should devolve upon him. When this condition arrives, the Chicago plan of employing special solicitors may be adopted.

### Duties of the Solicitor

The general duties of the solicitors have already been indi-

cated. They should visit employers of labor, seeking to determine in each case: (1) the general conditions of employment; (2) the maximum and minimum of laborers needed; (3) the range of seasonal labor; (4) the opportunities for employment and advancement. For reasons fo tact such purposes as these should be stressed by the solicitor. In no case should the employer be allowed to think that he is conferring a favor upon the employment office by giving an order for help. If he <sup>sees</sup> that the office is going about its work in a businesslike way, his respect will be gained and cooperation will come as a matter of course. With the information from such visits, the solicitor should be able to facilitate the turning of surplus workers from one industry to another with the least cost of time to the individuals. For the dove-tailing of industry, the information gained by the solicitor should be of the greatest value.

#### Solicitors' Blanks

For the recording of all information with which the solicitor will concern himself, the office should provide a special card or blank, arranged in such a way as to allow the accumulation of information to some extent, and to show the dates of the various visits. Such cards are already in use in New York and Illinois, and the information to be recorded is practically the same. A combination of the two, by taking the best from each, would prove a very serviceable card for use in the Minneapolis office.

The Chicago blank runs as follows: Firm name-- nature of business location--- street - - city; name of person in charge of hiring; telephone; average number of employes-- male -- female; number employed at present - male - female; any prospect of increasing the number in the near future; any prospect of decreasing in the near future; what are the principal occupations; does the firm look with favor

on the Public Employment office; ever engaged employes through this office; if so, were they satisfactory; willing to give the office a try in the future; does firm require a physical examination; any other special qualifications; business conditions:- good--normal--bad; remarks - - - - -; date - - ; Solicitor.

The New York blank makes inquiries , in addition to these, about busy and slack seasons, hours, rates of pay, preferences as to nationalities, ages, and chances for beginners.

#### General Advertising

"No office can make a reasonable success unless it conducts a systematic campaign of advertising, bringing it before the attention of all employers and employes, and causing every man looking for work to turn naturally to the public employment office."<sup>1</sup>

The same thing would be true of the public schools if they were not backed up by the compulsory education laws. Even now, free evening schools and extension courses must do a great deal of advertising and solicitation, and so does every state university to some extent. The best private agencies do a great deal of systematic advertising both for workers and for the patronage of employers.

Newspaper advertising by public employment offices is sometimes very effective and some of the best offices use the press freely. Much free advertising can be secured by 'live' news stories for the daily papers and various schemes can be worked by the superintendent with some press agent ability to gain publicity without resorting to paid advertisements. The amount and kind of advertising must, of course, be decided upon by the superintendent, who should be a man of great tact and judgement. In accepting invitations to address public meetings or clubs, the superintendent may use the opportunity

<sup>1</sup> See article by W.F.Houk, in Proceedings of Amer. Assn. of Public Employment offices, loc. cit., p. 50.

to disseminate information in regard to the office and endeavor to secure popular esteem. Anything like sudden popularity should be avoided, however. A slow and steady growth is what is desired. The support of local commercial, industrial, civic and social organizations may be secured, also. In this work the Advisory Board should be of great service.

Various advertising schemes are possible for a public office. Among the most useful is the superintendents' office card, such as is used by other business men and advertising agents. It is valuable in solicitation work as well as in general publicity. The card should not, perhaps, contain much data or be framed as an appeal for patronage; but rather to give the impression that the office is in a position to render valuable service of such a nature that employers and employes may be expected to flock to it. Other advertising forms such as blotters, hand cards, letter forms, and stationery may be used, giving a few important facts about the office, such as telephone numbers, hours for different kinds of labor, etc. The Chicago office is the best example of this kind of advertising.

#### Informing the General Public of the Work of the Public Employment Office

No small part of the success of any public office depends upon disseminating as widely as possible accurate knowledge of the work of the office. In too many cases at present the public is not only not familiar with the methods and scope of the work of public employment offices, but is actually ignorant of their existence. Public men, leading business men, secretaries of civic and commercial bodies, labor union officials, and others, have only the vaguest sort of notions that such institutions have been established. To meet such a condition, a public office must engage in active campaigns of education. With the support of daily newspapers, the publication of

which they were sent; the number of applications for help by employers; the kinds of workers demanded; the number of applicants "referred to positions"; the number of positions reported "filled"; and the kind of positions, whether "regular" or "temporary". These classes of information are primary and are easiest to obtain, being taken directly from the records. If desired, the reports can go far beyond this point. The office help and funds available will have some effect in determining the scope of the reports, and the judgement of the superintendent will also be influenced by what use can be made of further data.

The function of the Monthly Report will be to show the state of the demand for and the supply of labor in the various industries and occupations. There should be statistical tables showing the number of registrations by occupations, the number of positions offered by occupations, the number referred to occupations and the number of positions filled, also by occupations. To this might be added tables showing wages, by occupations, in the positions secured, together with information regarding the kind of workers placed, whether foreign or citizen, their ages, etc. Here again the superintendent must use his judgement as to what information is worth while giving out to the public. The plan proposed here is that followed by the state offices of New York. The bulletin is multigraphed and copies sent to newspapers and interested persons. Among the five state offices there is much competition aroused by this bulletin, and through it, the most efficient office becomes the standard for the rest of the state. The Massachusetts offices publish a monthly news letter which gives the conditions of the labor market during the past month and the outlook for the coming month. The State Bureau of Labor Statistics publishes a quarterly summary on

"Employment in Massachusetts", concerned mostly with reports from representative trade unions on percentages of unemployment in the various industries, but giving tables of the work of the employment offices. In Wisconsin the various offices, particularly Milwaukee, prepare a monthly summary which is given to the newspapers and the general press. This contains the result of employment office work and such other important information as the office sees fit to present.

It is unquestionable that monthly reports can be made of great value both in stimulating patronage of the office and public confidence, and also in disseminating valuable information in regard to the labor market. It should have important effects in distributing labor more evenly and it is not unlikely that it would have an important effect in helping in wage adjustments.

#### The Annual Report

The Annual Report presents even more important problems as regards contents and form of material. It is important, first, that the information included be ample and in such form that figures of later years shall be comparable with it. This means that it must be determined in the beginning what information is of value or will become important later on, and there should be no hesitation in collecting and recording in this form much of information that may seem of small value at the present time. These matters should be determined upon, after due consideration, by the superintendent and the Advisory Board in consultation, if possible, with the State Commissioner of Labor. The funds available will tend, of course, to limit the scope of such a report and it is the more important, therefore, that sufficient appropriations be secured. If employment offices are to deal with the problem of unemployment in any adequate way, there must be facilities for securing all the information possible

bearing upon the subject.

To date the annual reports of public employment offices fall into two general types, one of which is concerned almost wholly with statistical matter and the other concerned largely with general discussions of employment office problems, some of them bordering on sociological and economic theory. The advantages of the first plan are, in the first place, that it is cheaper, and, in the second that the discussions on the whole have very little merit. Annual reports are not considered as literature and are, therefore, not widely read. Primarily they are intended as reference works. It may be said, however, in defense of the practice of including discussions of employment office problems, that, in so far as these reports are interchanged and studied by employment office managers, they should have some influence in promoting greater uniformity of method in the conduct of the offices and in the reporting of the work done.

The Annual Report of the Illinois Free Employment Offices is the best example, perhaps, of the statistical type, containing less than a page of explanatory matter. The state law regarding public offices is appended, however, and is valuable in accounting for some of the tables included.<sup>1</sup> The New York report goes to the other extreme. It contains fifty pages of discussion and twelve pages of tables.<sup>2</sup> The Massachusetts report is of the same type.<sup>3</sup> In Los Angeles the report takes a median ground, with fifteen pages of introductory discussion and twenty-five pages of tables.<sup>4</sup> Such comparisons do not, however, give a fair notion of the comparative value of the reports. In general it seems to be the policy of young

<sup>1</sup> See Seventeenth Annual Report, 1915.

<sup>2</sup> See report of the Director, *loc. cit.*, pp. 255-320.

<sup>3</sup> See Ninth Annual Report of the State Free Employment Offices, 1915.

<sup>4</sup> See Third Annual Report of the Public Employment Bureaus, 1916.

offices and systems to give a good deal of space and emphasis to the discussion of the problems of organization and management. Massachusetts seems to be an exception to the rule, however, although a large part of the discussion included in the annual reports is intended as an explanation of the tables presented. On the other hand, Los Angeles, while it feels called upon to declare its efficiency in employment work, supports its observations with a series of forty-one tables summarizing its activities, as compared with twenty-five tables published in the Illinois report. It is to be hoped, of course, that the next few years will see definite standards adopted in the United States in regard to annual reports, among other things. Until that time each office must settle the question for itself on the basis of what information seems important enough to record, resources being considered.

In addition to yearly summaries of the information published in the monthly bulletin, the annual report should probably contain a financial statement with an itemized account of expenditures, a table showing "cost per position" for all persons placed, office totals, by divisions, and daily averages, by divisions, of applications, persons referred to positions and positions filled, and tables allowing comparisons of these figures with those of preceding years. From these tables of absolute figures, percentage tables, which are more valuable for purposes of comparison and for public consumption, might easily be prepared.

These tables of data may be considered the minimum of information which an annual report should contain. There is, perhaps, no maximum and the length to which a report may go in adding information and in analyzing in various ways the data given, is only limited, the funds being available, by the ingenuity of the statistician.

The desirability of much greater extension is, of course, another matter. On the whole, however, it seems worth while to include such data as: birthplace of applicants according to nations; citizenships; residence; conjugality; ages of applicants; number of persons dependent upon applicants; length of time out of work at time of application; weekly wage rate of the orders received and filled in the various industries for men, women, and juveniles; and, if transportation is advanced, totals of money expended in this way. As the years go by, summaries or totals for the entire life of the office might be added at regular intervals.

#### Statistics of Public Employment Offices

"Statistics," says Royal Meeker, "are not a sterile and unprofitable vanity, . . . . You can no more successfully conduct your employment offices without statistics than a farmer can farm without a plow."<sup>1</sup> Statistics furnish a measure, and the only sure measure, of the success of an employment office in meeting the problem of unemployment and the organization of the employment office. Further, they serve as a basis of preventive action, for vocational guidance, for a picture of present employment conditions, and, eventually, for insurance against unemployment, thus embodying all the information of interest to workers in public employment offices and kindred lines of welfare.<sup>2</sup> As has been indicated, they should consist of carefully collected data, comparable from year to year,<sup>3</sup> for various industries, on the amount and duration of employment and unemployment, the ages and occupations of those affected, the causes, etc. Detailed statistics of this sort are in use in the British labor exchanges, and through the information thus obtained,

<sup>1</sup> See Proceedings of Am. Assn. of Public Employment offices, loc. cit.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Andrews, op. cit., loc. cit., pp. 180-181.

<sup>3</sup> This means that there should be little change in the basis or form of the statistics from year to year, being well planned at first.

the National Unemployment Insurance benefits are paid. Minute attention is given to the forms used for registration and statistical purposes, on the theory that they do not now know what information will prove important later on, and that a little extra care and expense at the present will later on prove very valuable, perhaps.

#### The Need of Statistics

The tests of unemployment and its measures, in so far as they have been worked out, still lack uniformity; the work done by public employment offices in filling positions is reported in a different fashion by each individual office. For these particular reasons, an adequate system of statistics is needed if for no other. But there are other and more fundamental reasons or needs for accurate and reliable statistical information. As formulated by the late Dr. Chas. R. Henderson, we need adequate and uniform statistics:<sup>1</sup>(1) to correct our national beliefs about the evils and dangers of unemployment and to arouse the nation to action; (2) to map, locate, and measure the phenomena according to seasons, trades and localities; (3) to present the uniform conditions under which wage-earning is suspended so as to isolate the causes and measure their importance; (4) ultimately to give us the relative importance of risks in the various trades, with averages of very large numbers, through considerable time and over wide areas, as the basis for the actuarial calculations of the cost of insurance. Of course we cannot wait for these statistics before introducing public employment offices and other ameliorating measures. Indeed it is in connection with employment offices and insurance funds that the most useful statistics will be gathered.

<sup>1</sup> See article on "Recent Advances in the Struggle Against Unemployment," American Labor Legislation Review, Vol. 2, no. 1, p. 105.

### Terminology of Statistical Records

In order correctly to report and record the work of the employment office, the facts recorded in the daily business report and the terms used in explaining that record must be carefully considered as to whether they actually give a correct impression of the service which the office is rendering. The monthly reports sent out to the newspapers and the public, and the annual report which goes to the state legislature, to public officials, to students of social problems, and, finally, to officers and employes of other public offices, are only summaries and totals of daily records, using the same terms. Therefore it is highly important that the public office adopt a system of records, and a terminology, which will accurately portray the actual value of the service performed.

To do so intelligently, the methods in use in other offices must be known and the pitfalls avoided into which most of them have fallen. The office must adopt and adhere strictly to a system of usages based on the practices of the best and most successful offices of the United States, looking to the establishment of uniformity and common practice in reports.

"Applications for employment." This phrase or "Number of registrations" is used in various ways to give the number of persons who seek the services of the office in securing work. As variously interpreted it may mean that all are counted once, regardless of the number who apply, or it may mean the total number of applicants, regardless of how often each one has applied. Still another practice is to count only those who register for positions offered by employers. Obviously the correct practice must be that which reflects, as nearly as possible, the state of the labor market and the amount of unemployment. To count all applicants, regardless of how often any

one may have applied, is greatly to increase the apparent unemployment; to count only those registered for positions offered is greatly to minimize it.<sup>1</sup> The middle course of counting all registrations and re-registrations, but not renewals, will come nearest to giving a correct index of unemployment in so far as employment office records are of value.<sup>2</sup>

"Applications for help." This phrase, as generally used, is synonymous with the English term "vacancies notified." However, it sometimes is made to equal the number of times applications have been received from employers, regardless of the number of workers wanted each time, or, on the other hand, the total number of individuals "called for" by employers. In this last instance, of course, discrepancies arise from the fact that employers often ask to have more workmen sent than they wish or will hire, in order to be sure to get the needed number. Some offices, in order to make a good showing, do not record an order for help unless an applicant is sent to the job. The correct practice would seem to be the recording of all bona fide orders of employers for the number of men they desire and will hire, if the men are satisfactory. The office may send more men so that the employer may make a selection, but only the number hired should be recorded as "application for help."

"Positions filled." This is perhaps the most important point as regards employment office efficiency. In order to secure large appropriations, or the continuance of appropriations, some offices pad their figures of placements or place large numbers of workers in

<sup>1</sup> The Boston office has found that the practice of registering each applicant greatly increases apparent unemployment, since many applicants registered several times. Some made application while still employed, hoping to get better jobs; others would say they hadn't worked since registration, etc. So the practice of registering all who apply was discontinued; and now only those who apply on one day of each week are counted. (See Ninth Annual Report, 1915, p. 15.)

<sup>2</sup> See sections on registration and renewals.

in its report for the sake of "making a showing," and therefore the exact nature of the positions secured, as regards length of time, must be reported and recorded as accurately as is possible. The Chicago offices "take the word of the employer" as to whether the position is regular or temporary and the same policy is followed in Tacoma, Washington. Boston has never been able to distinguish satisfactorily between the two types of positions and is waiting for some unanimity of opinion on the subject from other offices. Milwaukee has drawn the line at one month, classing all positions of that length or longer as "regular". Few other offices attempt to distinguish in any way. For the present, then, it would seem that some arbitrary standard must be adopted and followed until some process of standardisation can work out a uniform system. The limit used by Milwaukee should serve as well as any other for this purpose. It is possible that local conditions in any particular city may make it necessary for the office to adopt a standard different from that in other cities, though this is hardly probable. In any case, the reports should explain the basis of classification so that there will be no confusion and so that results can be checked up approximately with the work of other offices.

"Cost of filling positions." While figures showing the cost of filling positions are not of great value in any case, yet most offices compute them. No two, however, except in rare cases, compute them upon the same scale. Some include all expenses in the total cost of filling positions; others exclude printing costs, and the rent is such a varying factor that the question of costs is complicated and varies widely. Cost per position filled varies in different offices from 8 ¢ reported from Seattle in 1913 to \$ 1.04 in Rhode Island offices for the same year. The more successful offices approach

neither extreme in the cost of placement and range from about 35¢ to 65¢. Perhaps there can be laid down no absolute rule for the computation of cost per placement, but by dividing the yearly total of all expenses regularly connected with the proper activities of the office by the number of persons placed, a fairly valuable figure should be the result. Whatever method is used should be clearly explained in the report. As costs are now computed, comparisons between offices are not just. No two bureaus are doing the same kind of work. Massachusetts, for example, spends much for vocational guidance, for furthering apprenticeship, and for placing the handicapped. Systems of bookkeeping vary also. And, as stated before, some offices report all applicants referred to positions as "jobs filled" when, in the best offices, less than sixty per cent are actually hired.

It should be observed, also, that high costs in filling positions do not imply poor management, nor is low cost per capita certain proof of economy or efficiency. Boston has high costs because of the larger scope of the work done and not, certainly, because of poor management. The Minnesota offices, on the other hand, reported an average of 15¢ per position filled in 1913, and the figure in no way indicates a high state of efficiency, for the offices do not have high records of placements and a large per cent of these represent either casual jobs of a few hours duration or mere "send-outs" where the positions were not actually secured. In every case the value of the figure on cost of placements will depend upon the practice in regard to reporting "positions filled". And here again the temptation of office superintendents to make a good showing for the sake of appropriations brings it about that the statistics published are inaccurate, meaningless, or false.

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